SYMPHONIES
AND THEIR MEANING

BY PHILIP H. GOEPP

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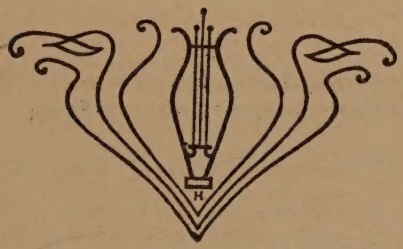

THIRTEENTH IMPRESSION

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TO

MRS. A. J. D. DIXON

WHO ENCOURAGED THE LECTURES
FROM WHICH IT GREW
THIS BOOK
IS
DEDICATED

Musicus qui numerans nescit se numerare

PREFACE

THE plan of this book is very simple It is really the reverse of the traditional. Little is here told of the lives of the masters; of a composer's ancestry, of the painful scale of his career, even of the date of his works. Concrete events have, in themselves, no place. And yet, it is believed, instead of a loss, there is in this very omission a great gain of personal interest, of insight into the essence of a master's individual quality, of his poetic character.

The plan is to open the book and see what is there, without discovering subtle stories or graphic pictures, avoiding, too, a mere technical analysis. There may be, in such an account of the impression of a master work, a discovery here and there of symbolic significance. The exact nature of this middle road cannot well be predicated. It is here that the

book must stand its own defence, which lies in the fulfilment, not in the words of the promise.

There is, at the outset, no value whatever in a mere theoretic exposition of themes and development. Undoubtedly the subjective intensity of the impression is strongly to be reckoned with. But there must be the balance, the rein which resists allegory run riot.

In such a view is the true mirror of the master. It is an unfailing, perfect test. From such a quiet, all-surveying study, as one looks at a painting standing off, it is possible to see the pervading quality, if it is there, or to detect its lack. The beauty will ever appear more clearly, or the faultiness, the meretricious deceit, the patched pretence of homogeneous whole.

Another word about the "meaning" of the symphonies. In the title this word has a negative intent, quite as strong as the positive. The book is meant to restrain the wrong interpretation, as to urge the right. True listening lies in the balance of intense enjoyment and clear perception. There must be no clouding by the one, nor too much interference of

translating thought. In a simple setting forth of a serious enjoyment will be all the "meaning" that the master will claim for his work, or the musician for his art. But to tell just how far the music gives the spirit of the master were idle in a preface, as it is the purpose of the book.

Thus the aim is primarily to set forth the impression of each of certain chosen symphonies, and through them to get, at first hand, a clear glimpse of the individuality of each of the great masters. Secondarily, it is intended to suggest, by the mode presented, an attitude in the listener which will increase his enjoyment by an intelligent perception of the intent of the master, or which, for critical purposes, may serve in testing a new work. An ultimate object, which it is not intended to pursue categorically, is the suggestion of an underlying purpose in the art, and, similarly, of its scope, wherein will be involved certain incidental questions of the connection between the art-work and the intent or unconscious thought, the personal tone, even the *morale*, of the master.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE 7

CHAPTER I.—*Introductory* 13

CHAPTER II.—*The Symphony* 23

CHAPTER III.—*Haydn* 42

Symphony in D (Peters Ed. No. 3).

Symphony in E♭ (Peters Ed. No. 1).

CHAPTER IV.—*Mozart* 68

Symphony in G Minor.

Symphony in C Major ("Jupiter").

CHAPTER V.—*Beethoven* 94

Symphony No. 3 (Eroica) 100

CHAPTER VI.—*Beethoven* (Continued).

Seventh Symphony 125

Fifth Symphony 147

CHAPTER VII.—*Schubert* 177

Unfinished Symphony 193

Symphony in C Major 201

CHAPTER VIII.—*Schumann* 248

CHAPTER IX.—*Schumann* (Continued).

Second Symphony (in C Major) 270

CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER X.—*Schumann* (Continued).
Third Symphony ("Rhine") 310
CHAPTER XI.—*Mendelssohn* 342
Italian Symphony 354
CHAPTER XII.—*Brahms* 366
CHAPTER XIII.—*Brahms* (Continued).
Second Symphony 377

SYMPHONIES
AND THEIR MEANING

I

INTRODUCTORY

THERE are some truths concerning the right attitude of listening to music, which had best be mentioned at the outset. They are not to be proved, like a theorem, in the pages which follow; there is no such deliberate or definite intent. On the contrary, they seem almost axiomatic; they are fundamental in all discussion and enjoyment of music. But they have been so long forgotten that they have a new look. The present generation may well be reminded of them.

In so far as they will be regarded as necessarily true, they may stand as the landmarks of the view, here presented, of the great masterpieces. In so far as they may be challenged,

the succeeding chapters are offered as exemplifications from which their truth may be concluded by a kind of inductive proof. For, unhappily, the time has not come for a systematic philosophy of art, or even of the tonal branch.

Agreement is wanting as to basic principles. No one dares to define the real purpose of art, the method of its working, or even the meaning of the word. This youngest of the sisters, music, has utterly disturbed traditional views. Aristotle's definitions of art will not fit with Beethoven's symphonies. So, in music especially, we are too near, so to speak, to take a general view. We are still groping in the bewilderment of a new paradise of sense impressions for some first principle, for the fruit of the tree of knowledge, whereby we may discern the good from the evil.

The first of these axioms is most in need of assertion, though its simple statement would probably pass an easy muster. But the attack is always subtle, indirect, and wide-spread.

There is truth in art, resting on fundamental principles; its landmarks exist; without them there is no true perception, no just criticism. Very likely

the point of this statement will be clearest from the opposite fallacy, which we often hear, that everything is good that sounds good. It does seem that this is a critical time for the art of music. It is, one might say, the hour for the declaration of independence, and, strangely, not of the many from the leaders, but of the leaders from the many. In prose and in poetry we do not hesitate to apply the searching test of sound art, with clear principles and highest ideals. And we are wont to listen with respect to those who are trained to know and to judge. There is a natural leadership of the few critics in literature, in painting, and in architecture. Yet in the most complex of all the arts we insist on this rampant democratic *dictum*, that it is all a rude question of taste. Nay, we dare to hold that precisely just because we are not trained, we are better qualified to judge; that it is the very knowledge that unfits the critic.

This is surely a strange condition for a great art. It is not wise to dispute such a position, to do more than show its absurdity. All will agree that it is one of the primeval purposes of art to develop a sense of beauty. But how

will the first step ever come, if our taste in the original condition of ignorance is to be the touchstone? There can be no progress, either in argument or in fact.

The fault lies, in reality, in that phase of modern art which casts to the winds sound principle, clear process, and rests all in the sensational and emotional effect, in utter indifference to the true or the false, the right or wrong of the workmanship.

We do not intend, surely, to let music be to us a mere narcotic, to affect us in a passive, unreasoning state. Therefore, I say, now more than ever there is need for true leaders, to save us from the false; but far more still, for each to become his own critic,—to master the principles which underlie true art, and the right attitude of reception and of perception.

In the classical past it was our good fortune to have none but true leaders. We learned to trust them unconsciously as well as implicitly. But with later democratic stirring there came inevitable demagoguism. Men appealed over the heads of those who had the true, the saner intuition to the ruder mob to whom clear thought was naught, sensational amusement

all. Democratic as we must be in government, there is no doubt that the bursts of popular will throughout the nineteenth century have had a sinister effect upon art. The lower instincts with the lower classes have broken away from the higher. Within the right meaning, the true democrat in government not only can, he must be the true aristocrat in art. And thus we may explain much of what is commonly charged of late against art, under such words as *degeneration* and *decadence*. Our only cure is, as we must act as a democracy, to have the feeling and thought of true aristocracy.

We must pay art, in general and special, the respect of an intelligent attitude, which we can only acquire by mastering its process, the mode of its working, and its intent. A century ago all this could not have been seriously thought in need even of suggestion.

The second premise relates to a question which has always raged with much uncertainty: the connection between the master's thought and his art-work. How far does he translate a "meaning" into his music? How far has he an intent that must be re-

garded? Or is it merely a pretty amusement, a delight of the senses, by nice combinations of beauty in tone, in color, and in outline? And this latter alternative cannot be disregarded, when it seems to be held by one who is accounted the greatest German critic of the day. Gradually, however, the truth is breaking, that, while the apparent purpose is that of mere delight, *the true essence of music is its unconscious subjective betrayal of a dominant feeling*, in contrast with the conscious, objective depiction in poetry and in the plastic arts. At once the charm and mystery is the stress on the unconsciousness of purpose. And yet it is not strange. Throughout life consciousness of action or of utterance is not only not needful; its effect is actually weakening as a useless diversion of the mind. It is this very absence of self-observation which gives music its overwhelming power as a means of expression. This is in harmony, too, with that modern experience which believes more and more in personal force and influence, which, without materialism, believes less and less in the virtue of definite dogma.

In a talk with a friend, the spoken word is

not essential, rather the personal attitude unconsciously betrayed. So in a symphony of Beethoven the ultimate purpose is the utterance of the high thought or feeling of a great man. However unconscious this aim may be, I think it may justly be called the true intent of the master.

It may be thought, however, that there is here too little stress on the art proper, in its perfection of form and detailed beauty. The answer is, perhaps subtle: between the intensity and nobility of the feeling which dominates the poet, and its artistic expression is a close and curious connection, and, further, an analogy. As, after all, the apparent, the conscious purpose is a beautiful work of art, the nobility of the poet is measured by the nobility of his work; his clearness of vision, by the perfection of detail. The truth is, a high feeling compels a great utterance; and conversely, where there is a beautiful expression there must be nobility of the prompting thought. Thus the greatest poets will have the purest form. In proportion as the feeling or thought is intense, its utterance will be sustained in a work of high structure. A true poet does not roar

himself into a state, in order to convey his emotion; that is not the kind the world cares to hear. Therefore it follows, of course, that the feeling at the source is only reached by a perception of the beauty of the art-work. And the object must always be so to study the master-works as to feel most keenly the unconscious intent, the mood-purpose of the creator.

It is clear how the first premise leads to the second as a natural preliminary, and how each reinforces the other. So the third will prove but a larger view of the second; and all are but different phases of the whole truth.

In poetry we do not hesitate to regard the moral quality of the poet. In music this seems never to be thought of. Yet in music this personal tone of the poet is more potent far than in the other arts; it is more subtly conveyed, and needs most to be watched. All moral influence is exerted, we know, not so much logically or intellectually, as emotionally. Music, which affects the feelings most powerfully, most easily conveys the per-

sonal influence of the poet to the hearers. We all know the moral force of companionship, of mere neighborhood. Yet how could this personal tone be conveyed more directly than by a word uttered in living figures of sound.

The mystery, of course, is how we are to detect this moral quality, where there are no tell-tale words and story. Impossible, however, as it is to sum up in systematic philosophy, nothing is so clear to the persistent and open-minded listener in both phases, the good and the bad, the moral and unmoral. I have pointed above to the curious connection or analogy between honesty of art and honesty of feeling. It is equally true between the dishonesty of the one and of the other. In an unbiassed and intelligent attitude, no category of evidence in court is clearer than from the four corners of the document of symphony or opera. For thoroughly following out such a plan it might be well to embrace works of both kinds. It must follow that if we glow in tune with the high aspiration of a Beethoven, we must be ready to discern the trick of the false prophet. But in a work like the present

the negative phase of criticism cannot be more than suggested.

It is just here that musical criticism has been lacking. It has followed an even tenor of so-called catholic tolerance of good and bad, of the false and the true. Again, it has lost all thought, it has taken no account whatever, of any element beyond the mere æsthetic. In fact, it is the moral that rouses the greatest enthusiasm, in art as well as in life. The charming, after all, gives mere temporary pleasure. It is precisely in so far as the moral element has been forgotten that music has not been highly regarded.

Thus, then, in the attitude of the intelligent point of view first insisted on, we see, from the second, how the intent, the feeling of the master is reflected from the particular work; and finally, from the third, how, from a broader view even than the second (rather from a succession of such impressions), the *morale* of the master shines clear throughout his art.

II

THE SYMPHONY

Art, it would seem, begins its career, like man, by leaning on another. Thus, sculpture was first subordinate to architecture. Painting, in turn, was the foster-child of sculpture, in the beginning merely tracing outlines and features, much like an infant writing with guided hand.

Music in Greece followed slavishly the metre of the poetry.* In the early church, before Gregory, the words of the liturgy were intoned with complete subservience to the rhythm of the verse, so that agreement of singing was possible only when the chorus followed the arbitrary leader.

It is most valuable to see clearly the final

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* With all the "discoveries" of Pindaric odes, nothing has ever established the fact of a Greek conception of musical rhythm independent of that of the verse. Greek "music" lacked the first requisite for a tonal art.

evolution of the independent art of absolute instrumental music as the latest link in this chain. Leaning on the words and story of the drama, music developed, on the stage of the opera, melody, and its accompaniment in tones colored by various blending and contrasting instruments. She was preparing her pallet. In the church, following the lead of the service, music was exploring all the possibilities of polyphonic combination and of architectural complexity by algebraic computation. But in neither church service nor in opera was she progressing unaided. Of course, walking with a cane is different from depending on a guiding parent. So differs the music of Palæstrina from that of Ambrose. But even in the great Bach's works music had not thrown away all her supports. She first learned to tread her independent course, speaking her message purely in her own language of tones unaided by words, when she lisped the first sonata, which, in orchestral dress, is the symphony.

It must be remembered that the entire growth of the art of music, and what was really the slow manufacture of its elements and forms, was wrought within the Church.

This development began when to the unison chant was added the servile accompaniment of a second voice, keeping always its unaltered respectful distance. It ended when all the changes of fugal counterpoint had been rung with mathematical ingenuity. But until modern centuries there had not been a thought of music without words, of unsung music. When the absurdly artificial forms were abandoned by mutinous singers, the organ took the place of the unwilling voice, and invited further composition for its special performance.

But this had nothing in common with secular instrumental music and its origin. For the elements, we must go back to the strange attempts at opera by Italian amateurs. The very convenient date of the first opera—1600—is an excellent landmark in gauging the growth of unsung secular music,—the year when Peri's "Eurydice" was produced in Florence. It is in the formless preludes and interludes of the players that the germ of the symphony lies. The first conception of flowing *cantabile* melody, which is the very fibre and tissue of every movement, came in the early opera. (There is absolutely no kinship

between this *melody* and the fugal *theme* of the church school.) With these the dance, of obscure origin, completes the foundation on which sonatas and symphonies were reared.

If we enter the forge in which these materials were being welded into the great forms of the symphony,—in other words, if we study the precursors of the masters,—we find, indeed, little promise of intellectual significance, or, for that matter, of pleasurable amusement. But, in art, periods of exclusively formal growth always lack imaginative power. It is like latent heat, when ice changes to water. Great men, it would seem, are content with the form they find, hiding the lines with their fulness of thought. Shallower minds, sensitive to popular demand, tinker at new devices of outward novelty. Thus, Sebastian Bach did not find the sonata sufficiently perfected. Haydn was the first master to approve. Therefore, in a review of the history of musical thought rather than of musical structure, it may fairly be said that the sonata and the whole school of secular instrumental music did not begin before Haydn.

The analogy between Bach and the secular

masters is striking. In his earlier generation he found nothing but the strict forms of the church school. He gave them their essential artistic purpose; he crowned their development by endowing them with the highest expression of religious feeling. When a master thus reaches the greatest height, a lower level must be started in another direction, leading to a second master.

If we take a survey of this new stream of worldly composition—melodies with artificial accompaniment, digressions of rippling scales or tripping arpeggios and suddenly intruding crashes of full chords—and contrast it with what is found in the church school with its precise, dignified, and elaborate structure of voices, independent in melody, yet interdependent in harmony, the question comes, What new spirit moves here? How can there be, almost at the same time, two opposite phases of the same art, both honored by the greatest masters?

Clearly, here is the latest, though not the weakest, wave of the Renaissance pulse. The same rebellion against the all-absorbing intellectual domination of the Church, the same

resistless wave of earthly feeling and its expression, apparent in painting and in the literatures of England, France, and Italy, is here manifest in the youngest of the arts. Why the movement is so late in music need not be discussed beyond again saying that the art was jealously and exclusively fostered by the Church. All its forms, its whole framework had been devised solely for worship. An entirely new garb must be created before it could venture from the cloister into the gay world without great awkwardness and stiffness. Much depth of feeling or intellectual emphasis must not be expected of the first century of this new phase. The early works show their reactionary origin by utter frivolity and shallowness. Until an actual fitting form was obtained, there was a constant striving after a satisfaction of this very need, a self-conscious kind of emphasis of mere sound; the composer sought to fill in as many black notes as possible.

The beginning of Haydn's career marks the final attainment of this form, and at the same time a sudden spring of true poetic feeling. The result was what is commonly called the

sonata, which is really what we are considering; for a symphony is nothing else than a sonata written for the orchestra. In the light of the absolute newness of unsung music is seen the fitness of the name "sonata," that which is merely sounded, in contrast with that which is sung, the "cantata." Nowhere, I venture to say, in any phase of art, is the shock greater than of this burst from the sombre, confined, careful, intellectual process of the cloister to the free, irresponsible fancy dancing first over the meadows and in the forests, then into the life of men, the turmoil and the triumph of war, the romance and ecstasy of human affection.

It is clear, then, why the expected order—first of the less defined, second of the more clearly significant phase of the art—should be reversed. Within the cloister music had reached a high and complex power of expression of those feelings which were there sanctioned. Without, all was new and vague; there were no words or forms of expression for the new life. It must begin with the A B C of a new language. To condemn the first fruits of this stage for lack of definiteness of

meaning would be to misunderstand the very purpose of all art. While definite language is not impossible to art, this is not its chief function; no more is mere beauty of outline. If a sentiment be expressed and transmitted, the medium of its transmission will be entitled to its place as an art of form. The language of prose has not the power thus to express and transmit all sentiment, though it may entitle its field in a rough sort of way. What prose cannot, the other arts must do, each in its peculiar region, not, perhaps, without encroaching mutually. Each art, beginning with primordial feelings, will translate more and more delicate shades in a constantly refining process, the form always reacting on the sentiment and suggesting an advance.

This must account for the vagueness of the earlier great works for instruments. But even in Haydn the pastoral element, the poetry of nature, discovered anew, is unmistakable, as is the peculiar playfulness of his humor. In fact, the appearance of humor of any kind in music in the eighteenth century is as absolutely new as anything can be under the sun. Imagine how utterly inconceivable it would have been

to the long line, stretching through many centuries, of the worthy fosterers of music in the Church.

The sonata was said by a German critic to be intended by the earliest writers to show in the first movement what they could do, in the second what they could feel, in the last how glad they were to have finished. The simplicity of this interpretation—and no doubt it is accurate—emphasizes the vagueness of the real sentiment. In the hands of great men the form very soon attained a much more dignified plan.

In technicalities the essence is often lost. There is no value in analysis in itself. Yet a clear view of the general purpose is not dimmed by a glance at those elements which have in them more than mere technical value. The question is not merely what is the general purpose of the symphony, but what is the special value of the accepted model in carrying out this purpose. And, as has been said above, the first requisite in the listener is an intelligent grasp of the work.

In short, what is the essential of the much-mentioned sonata form; of the outline of the

other movements; indeed, of the structure of the whole? A few relentless *wherefores* will bring us to the right point of attack. Nor can the answer lie in a technical statement of theme, of development, of tonality, and so on. But the one clear and grateful approach is by an historic view, where we see the need—the real *raison d'être*—of each cardinal element.

In the first place, the main stress of the symphony—indeed, of most absolute music—is centred on what is called the sonata form. It is the mould in which is cast the first movement: the serious burst of aspiring thought. The second, to be sure, is of no less dignity. But it is in complete contrast with the stress and strife, the stirring progress of the first. It is a calm lyric utterance from the high level to which the first mood has ascended. It does not need the discussion of the other. Simplicity of statement in the verses of a song is its natural utterance. Nowhere is the depth of genius of the highest master better shown than in the Andante,—that profound, broad sympathy of Beethoven, distinct from the statuesque pathos of Haydn, or the stately grace of Mozart. Here was reflected Beethoven's

highest trait, that which bound men to him most strongly. In the third phase the feeling of relaxation is undoubted, and, fittingly, the form, even in the highest flights, is based on the dance. The mood has passed from the spirit's stir and spring through pathos to humor. In its original conception this effect of relief, of restraint from the tension of the early movements, was continued in the last. A form peculiarly fitting for careless joy existed in the Rondo, where the melody appeared and vanished with graceful interludes, which later developed into lesser tunes. Discussion was supplanted by a constant, playful alternation of the various melodies. As the symphony grew a more serious utterance of poetic feeling, the last movement often rose to a second climax; and—here appears the meaning of form and of detail—the rondo yielded then to the Sonata type.

What, then, was this sonata form? What are the elements of its power for this new poetic expression?

Again, in the historic view, it is at once amusing, pathetic, and enlightening to see the

struggles which preceded the great discovery. In Bach's time the approved form was the suite of dances, transplanted from the itinerant street-players to the new clavichord or newer piano-forte. At best this was a mere series of unrelated dances, idealized, to be sure, with expansion and polyphonic treatment. It was the holiday music of the learned musician, his only secular vent; and it afforded the special form for a kind of public tournament between rival players and composers. But, with the best intention to be worldly, there was over it the stern, ascetic, intellectual stamp of the Church spirit. What was the reaction of treatment which must answer the reaction of secular feeling?

The peculiar quality, as in the strict Church forms, was an unrelieved *monothemism.* Impressed with the traditional simple theme of counterpoint, men could not escape it; they lacked the artistic conception of the dual element, of balance, of contrast. The mystery, the strangeness, is that, not to speak of the eventual solution, the need itself was not clear. And unless we can see the very need, we cannot grasp the full meaning of the sonata and symphony.

In a general way, it was felt, there must be rebellion against the Church process,—no more learned counterpoint; no textual theme frugally sounded without harmonic surroundings, like the verse of a sermon; no eternal ringing of its relentless burden, like the doom of dogma without a hint of repose, of cadence,—on and on, the voices ever multiplying the warning phrase to a final massive climax of solemn architecture. Away with it all! There must be no taint of fugue in the new spirit. The whole machinery of church forms seemed designed and fitted to an impersonal, a self-effaced contemplation of high dogmatic truth of the utmost solemnity. Here, out of the Church, men dare to be happy and gay in their individual joy; they dare to celebrate the woods and the green things of the earth. They want a complete summer holiday from the damp air of the Church.

Now see the features of this new expression as they carry out this new feeling. There must be a better and simpler meaning for our technical big words. What seems the first, the most significant, the most potent, is a clear sense of harmonic residence, what the musicians

call tonality, as against the gray color, in the fugue, of a key vague until the end. Again, it seems, there is the impulse to utter a sense of worldly repose, in defiance of the constant strife in the fugue, which knew no rest until the final end.

Nowhere is this contrast clearer than in the piano works of Sebastian Bach and of Domenico Scarlatti. They were contemporaries, almost to the year. But Scarlatti had caught the earthly spirit in sunny Italy, under the inspiration of his father Alessandro, the founder of the new *aria*. Bach, somehow, could never get clear of the shadow of the cloister. With the German his dance-moods are still o'ercast with the pale hue of meditation. He was glancing out of doors through the windows of his study. The Italian was roving with a firm foot in the fields; he was ringing out his tintinnabulations with clearest note of tonal serenity and certainty,—still always the same one tune. He could have but a single idea at a time; no broad sense of balance, of contrast, of perspective. On such a basis there could never rise a structure of much serious dignity. But this is not all.

We must see, too, the strange alternative of the qualities of *Bach* and of *Scarlatti:* of vague reflection and of clear tonal simplicity. It seems that tonality must be at the expense of depth. The voices were borrowed for harmonic subservience, and must cease to discuss the theme. In a sense they were degraded from counsellors to train-bearers. So, in an ideal sense, there was a temporary loss of dignity. But this simplicity was after all a gain.

So far the elements are the same of the other secular moulds, of the song, the dance and the rondo. We have not yet come to the final typical trait of the strict sonata. It was a reconciliation of the various needs: first, of this tonality, the sense of certain harmonic location; second, of relief from monotony of single melody, a sense of duality; finally, of a quality which had been too completely lost with the fugue.

And this very stirring search has shown what a peculiar place the fugue filled. Let us return, for a thought, before the days of unsung music. Our art is still walking hand in hand with her older sister Poetry, but unmanageable, restless.

One day a master dreams his melody for the instrument alone. Now it is clear that music must somehow atone for the new want of words. A song deprived of words is and remains incomplete. The clear meaning is gone, there is mere vacant beauty. Here begins the stir for a definite language of pure tones. And this is significant, too: none of the older forms were the achievement of music itself, its self-found utterance. They are foreign; they belonged to poetry, like the song, or to the dance, like the minuet. See, therefore, how this new *sonata* form is actually the first proper mode of expression of the pure art of music. *It says something in mere tones.*

From another point of view, the half-conscious want of the early masters in their search was this: they were dissatisfied with mere lyric burst, mere singing of the tune; *they must talk about it; they must get somewhere.* They quickly felt that melody was, after all, mere theme or text; there was no progress until you discussed it.

This element of discussion, of progress, which, in a sense, had been lost in the fugue, now achieved in a novel way, was the crowning

virtue of the new form for sonata and symphony. So here is the problem: to express the definiteness which had been lost with the words; to go beyond mere striking of the melody; to start the pace for a genuine art, which, beyond creating pretty phrases, will find a language for ever deepening and ever differentiating shades of feeling, approaching the clearness of verbal thought. Finally, in the structure of the whole work will lie the art-form, which will build and co-ordinate in supplementary moods one homogeneous expression of a great emotional idea.

How this special purpose of discussion was carried out, the need being clear, will be easily seen; further, too, how each element—of tonality, of duality, of discussion—reinforced the other.

The final achievement was this:

A melody begins with clear intonation of the key, by harmonic sounding of the main chord. It is succeeded presently by a second, which is contrasted in every way,—in character, in movement, and in key. Now see how duality helps tonality. Black is black, after all, only in contrast with white. So the original tonic

key is not really clear, until a departure into the complementary dominant, with the second melody. Thus the contrast, with well-marked cadence, sharpens the effect of each.

When the two melodies have been stated, there is, of course, a sojourn, a cadence, in the complementary key, the dominant. This in itself invites a return homeward to the original, or tonic. At the same time, the clearness of stated melodies is assured by a repetition from the beginning. And now the story really begins: the characters are described; now they act and talk; the several musical ideas are discussed, singly or together, to new surprises of climax and beauty; they take on the guise often of new melodies, or melodies of kindred beauty are suggested. Thus (not to bind ourselves beyond the hint of analogy) the themes pass from the mere phase of lyric utterance to that of epic narrative, not without strong dramatic power. Now must come the close; and see once more the interrelation of key and theme, of tonality and duality. The melodies reappear in the original order, but with change in key; for the second must close in the tonic. And, again, the balance is maintained;

for, while the earlier melody had the advantage of first appearance, the second has the last word in this, the principal tonal territory.*

And thus a symphony (which, etymologically, means a sounding together, using, as it did, all the resources of instrumental sound, and in Beethoven's Ninth even pressing voices into service) had, from the time of Mozart, the ambitious purpose of expressing a sort of modulation through three or four moods of one dominant feeling. I use the word "feeling" for lack of a better. In its highest phase, this purpose sometimes is a kind of poetic view of life, colored by what is at the time the individuality of the composer.

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* The association of the first melody with the tonic key has in most sonata movements prevailed over the need of contrast of tonality. In these the final statement of melodies has the first in the tonic, followed by the second in the same key.

III

HAYDN

Perhaps the distinguishing trait and charm of Haydn is a certain out-of-doors feeling after church or school, a dancing exuberance of childlike humor and hilarity, what the Germans call *Ausgelassenheit.* Haydn never lost this note. And we must mark that it was to express this feeling first and foremost that the symphony was invented. Later, to be sure, the symphony and fugue approached each other—were even blended—in spirit and in form.

This discovery has a double view,—one, that Haydn was the first to put a mood into the symphony: he was the first great secular tone-poet. In him feeling first mastered form, a feeling of pure joyousness; yet he could rise to a serious height of solemn devotion. There was not the subsequent note of defiance, of awful depth or sublimity. But Haydn had a serene profundity of his own, and, moreover, a true lyric beauty.

The other view is the original simplicity of the purpose of the symphony, its note of reaction from stern complexities to a holiday mood. There is no breath of philosophy in the beginning,—mere childlike abandon. This finds naturally its symptoms and proof in the early form and treatment. And yet we should be farthest from the truth if we ascribed to Haydn a lack of mastery. The striking fact that the change was one of feeling, is clearest in the voluntary simplicity of the masters who could, at the proper hour, write the most profound counterpoint. Indeed, the tradition of the older school compelled a thorough training of the musician.

But the earliest bent of structural creation was in a horizontal direction, not vertical; was in melody and outline rather than in simultaneous polyphonic combinations. As soon as the form was achieved, the deepening process, in both senses, began with Haydn. In fact, Haydn in his long career (he wrote his first symphony before Mozart's birth, his greatest after the latter's death) shows very well the various phases of the whole movement.

In his later works the depth of treatment, united to light simplicity, is a most wonderful blending, a most delightful alternation of serious playfulness and playful seriousness. It is impossible to see how Haydn can fail to be perennial.

Aside from his undoubted absolute value, Haydn's importance is in some degree historic in his position as the pioneer in the expression in great art-works of purely secular feeling. A clear outward sign of this is his creation of the modern orchestra. It is not unjust to say that the orchestra, with predominance of strings, was the original conception of Haydn.

With Bach the orchestra belonged to the spirit of the Church, of frugal Protestant piety; with Handel it was devoted to the dramatic celebration of biblical themes, or, as in Gluck, of mythological heroes. With all it was stiff, undeveloped, and harsh, under the shrill domination of the classic pipe and reed. With Haydn, as the strings uttered the soft hum of woods and meadows, it was a joyous, exultant praise of nature. And see the significance of the titles of Haydn's oratorios, the "Creation,"

the "Seasons;" contrast them with earlier subjects.

But with all this relative position, there is no question of Haydn's absolute value. His adagios may have a mock-heroic, a pseudo-pathetic air; but his andantes are true lyric feeling.

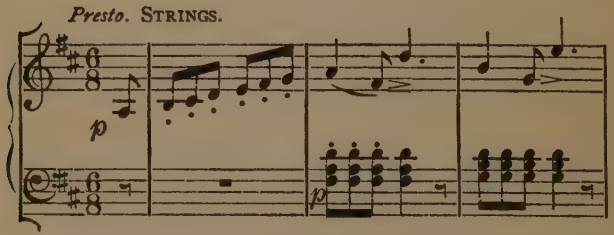
With Haydn the symphony began as *salon* amusement, and soon reached the height of poetic expression of exuberant joyousness, of playful humor, and of a certain idyllic, lyric utterance. With Mozart it deepened in intensity and broadened in scope. Losing the limitations of *bourgeois* humor and joy, it took a more cosmic view. We shall see later a great step over both masters. In Haydn and Mozart music still had strongly the entertaining attitude; it was there principally to give pleasure. There was no suggestion of prophecy, of warning, of defiant proclamation of truth in general, or of any definite truth in particular. Music did not, as yet, in Beethoven's words, "strike fire from the soul of man." Haydn's holiday spirit, complete in contrast with the Church school, was limited in comparison with his successors. In Mozart a classic depth and balance was

gained. Boyish exuberance yielded to maturer serenity. Depth of pathos was first explored. Haydn's was the song of the child; Mozart's of the youth; Beethoven's of the man. When, in Beethoven, feeling controls the form, the advance in poetic expression of passion seems as great as Haydn's original step.

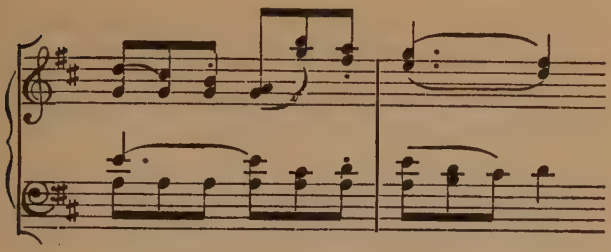
Symphony in D.

(Peters Edition, No. 3.)

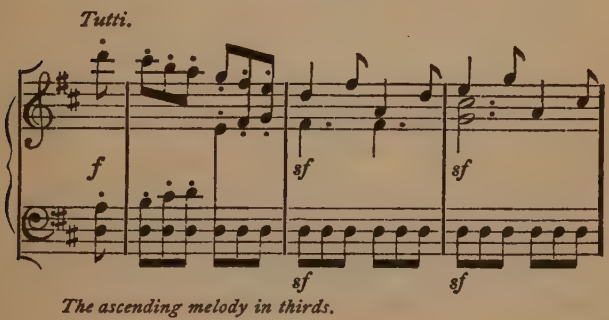
Haydn must always begin with the grave *Adagio*, which is as solemn as it is short. Often it seems hardly meant seriously. One cannot help thinking of the king of France and twenty thousand men. All this majestic striking of attitudes, to run off, after a few bars, into the sprightliest of *Presto* themes:



The bass, as commonly, doubled below.



reversed later, as countertheme:

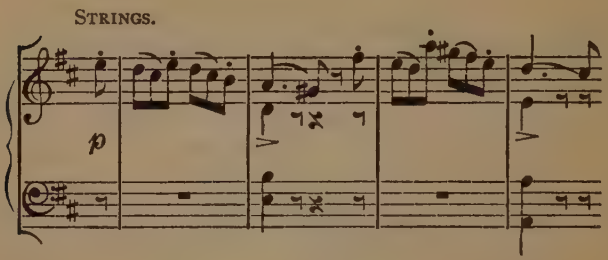


The ascending melody in thirds.

All fits so perfectly that every one is unconsciously dancing alone, yet in perfect agreement with the rest. Everything is so simple,—the theme, the rhythm, the most obvious modulations, that one cannot see the secret of the eternal freshness. In the most natural way, a new melody and rhythm is made from the

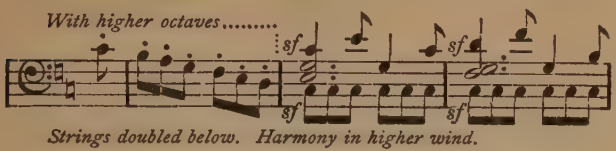
countertheme by merely shifting the accent, using question for answer.

The second melody brings no great change of feeling:

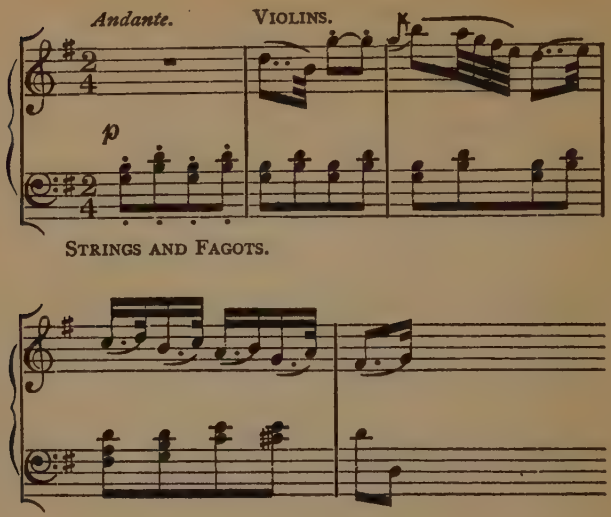


No one has succeeded, like Haydn, in being childlike, and, withal, fundamental; joyful, hilarious even, yet cosmic; light and simple, with pervading complexity.

After statement and repetition of melodies, the *Presto* continues, according to tradition, to discourse on the second theme. Here we may expect the highest polyphony, or contrapuntal discussion between the voices; and we are not disappointed. As in string quartet, the violins each have their say on the text of the melody, —now successively, now by alternate interruption, or, again, in dual agreement. Later the fagots put in their word, then all the

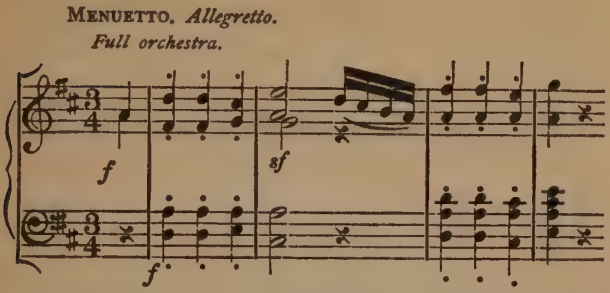
woodwind; finally the brass and all join in the jolly countertheme, with much irresponsible

merriment in related phrases. The re-entrance of melodies in original order begins in the accustomed way, but suddenly turns, against all rule, into the developing episode of the second subject, and ends, naturally though irregularly, with final singing of the principal theme. The whole movement shows how the masters who first moulded the forms of the symphony, were, in a way, least bound by its shackles,—had the most perfect freedom of utterance.

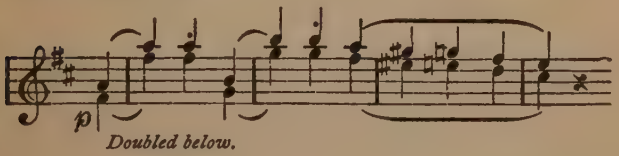
The *Andante* is German folk-song of the purest and simplest. It seems that the most natural intervals and harmonies are the proper utterance of the Germans; all other "folk" must take up with the strange and eccentric. The nearer they are akin to the Germans, the more they share in the rights of the tonic and dominant. Like many of Haydn's slow movements, this is largely a variation of one melody,



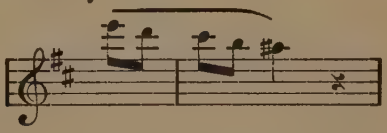
with but a single foreign episode,—the *Minore*. The latter, in its fragmental phrases, its pompous and eccentric stride of principal and lesser figures, in the general clatter and noise, seems intended mainly to give relief to the simplicity of the principal melody,—perhaps to add a tinge of dignity.

Haydn's scherzos always have a strong "out of school" feeling,—this one especially; only it is a short recess. The themes of the two middle movements are plainly discernible at

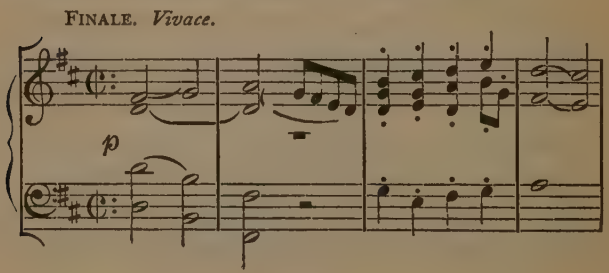
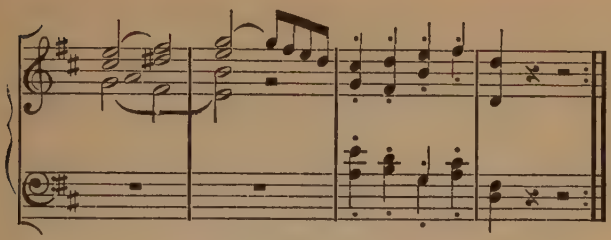
first hearing. But mark, after the first burst of the whole orchestra:

the playfulness of the answer, whispered by strings and flutes:



and the comic mocking of basses and trebles in the first cadence. The Trio in its first eight bars has always been somewhat of a mystery: why Haydn should have used what seems the most modern of bizarre effects,—a continuous sounding of the tonic chord in the strings, with a melody in the flutes, which almost craves a momentary glimpse of the dominant.

Haydn probably wanted a touch of the hurdy-gurdy. It must be well marked that the second time he clearly yields to the demands of the dominant, though still keeping a tonic pedal-point. The development of the Trio is much more important than of the Scherzo, discoursing on a more suggestive theme, a phrase from the Trio melody:

It is full of a humor and spirit of its own.

Strange to say, the Finale (marked *Vivace*) is quite the most serious phase of the symphony. Recess is quite over; we are back in school—not to say church. For the violins, like a well trained choir, are striking up a melody that sounds much like a good old chorale:



Simply stated, without a note of extended cadence, it is strictly repeated as if to make sure we know it. It is like the preacher who states his text with all serious unction, and repeats it, to give warning of the great sermon which is to follow. We are sure it is a rondo, mainly because it is not sonata-form; the cardinal theme, in its constant rounds, never lets us forget the text of the sermon. After some playing of themal phrases, there comes one of those dynamic passages, where all join to make a noise, and finally drop exhausted into a cadence; whereupon the strings, with a little help from the wood, gently toss about snatches of the melody, and the rest pitch in again in general turbulence. At last the strings rehearse the theme in really serious manner, with but slight *obligato* variation. The rest, too, join

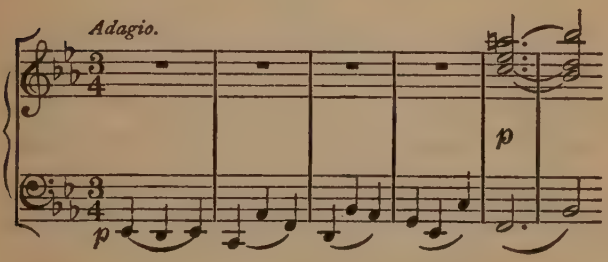
properly and respectfully in singing the hymn in its original harmonies. Soon comes another of those terrible phases, another *Minore*, where Papa Haydn tries so hard to look very fierce, without anything special to say; merely general muttering, with the same old faces. We all know it is only to break the more pleasantly into his own benignant smile.

Here is the fugue, which we knew was coming from the emphatic way the theme was first enounced. With such a theme it could not be resisted. It begins in the first violins, with the seconds tripping in *obligato* behind, before, and all around, until they finally take up the theme, and the violas "hold the candle." Best of all is when the cellos come in and the rest all play about. Of course, the violas have their turn, too. Finally, the wood make a trial at the theme, while the violins go on without attending to their ineffective attempts, and finally run away from them on a side path. At last the whole orchestra joins in the fugue with all possible magnificence and solemnity, until the last verse, which is sung once more as at first.

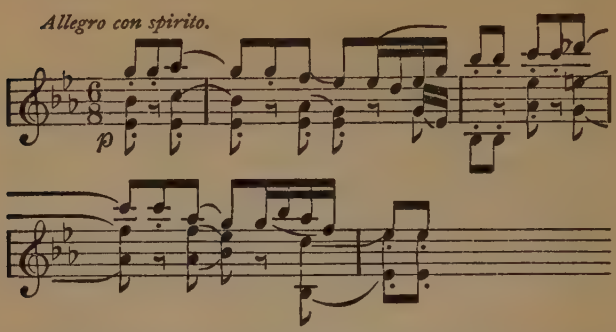
Symphony in E♭.

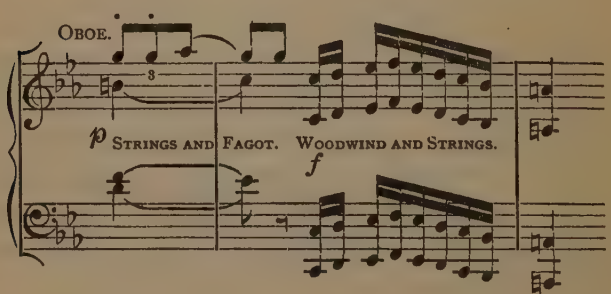
(Peters Edition, No. 1.)

Here, again, is Haydn's beginning *Adagio*,—very beautiful; yet somehow it seems a mere "attention," or the formal prayer on entering church; or it is like the child's game, where

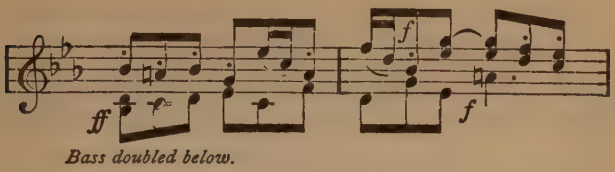


serious pretence but leads to frivolous surprise. Perhaps it does give a certain serious tone to the whole. But pathos was never Haydn's strong point. So he is glad to give way to the merry dance of the *Allegro*, like a monk's disguise thrown off by the dancer. Of course, our symphony has not quite emerged from the frivolous stage.

The melody is at once delightful in itself, and promising for "talking about" later on:

all in Haydn's favorite strings, while the woodwind merely answer in a noisy acclaim in a rather unimportant way, with loud calls and echoes,—very playfully, too, as when oboes, fagots, and strings softly sound the theme, and then all answer in frightening chorus:

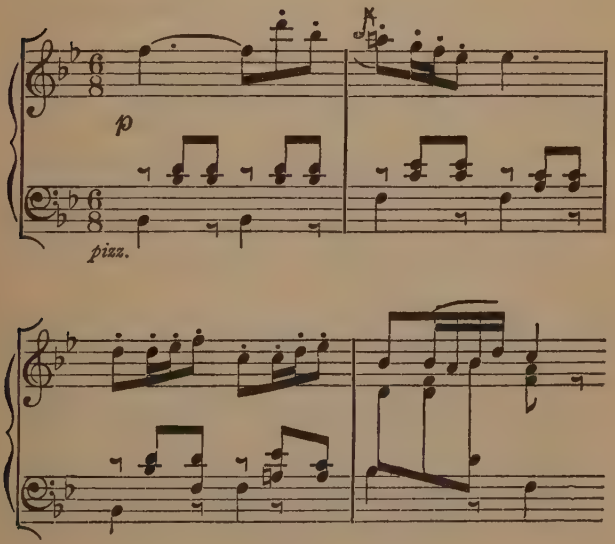


There is a queer bustling figure which looks as though we had heard it before:



Bass doubled below.

but we are sure we have not.

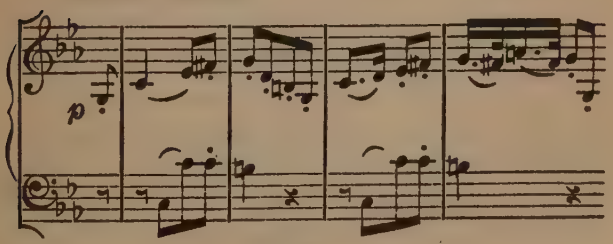
At last, a dancing melody comes along in not too foreign a key, quite as a merry afterthought, and sets the whole orchestra dancing with it:

And now, after repeated statement of both melodies, begins Haydn's typical phase of architectural lightness. Complexity usually suggests seriousness. But with Haydn it is the mood of old madrigals, of general merry-making. Yet the depth of treatment, when analyzed, is greater than of fugues; only it is spontaneous, and therefore the more perfect. There is a delicious conflict of rhythm; and so profound is the architecture that we must abandon minute perception. We can merely enjoy the general daze of varied harmony and structure.

Again enters the curiously familiar strain which we cannot place; more of playful and sometimes solemn repartee of higher and lower strings on the main theme; introducing, again, with delicious surprise, the dance of the second melody in a new light, while the woodwind are pertly talking back.

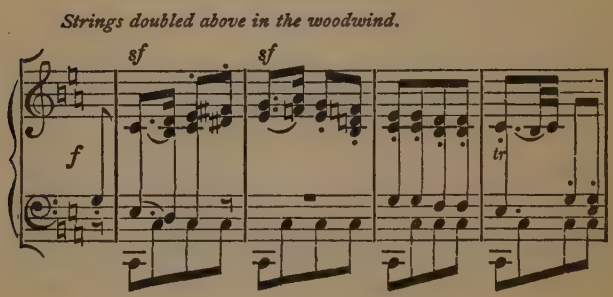
Then in orthodox simplicity the melodies enter in the original order, until—something strange happens. Out of a noisy tumult, closing in hushed cadence, the monkish figure reappears; the first melody is sung again. And now we see the secret of the strange

melody; for, following immediately upon the former, it proves to be nothing but its mocking echo in very quick rhythm. The likeness between monk and dancer does not appear until the strain is rung in the successive variations, *penseroso* and *allegro*. On the whole, it does seem that Haydn, though he is charged here with serious intent, has again sacrificed all to his mood of friendly humor half unconsciously, like an amiable person turning off a severe word with a pleasantry.

But the *Andante* is, for Haydn, unusually solemn. The playing by strings, however, restores the typical quality. There is some of the stateliness that Papa Haydn would almost deliberately assume: "Now we must be very serious."

Andante. STRINGS.

But it has the fine, strong diatonic simplicity which marks all great music; and this appears especially in the major guise, later on.

It is all a series of variations on this melody. The first, in the major, has much of that German simplicity of intimate sentiment. In the



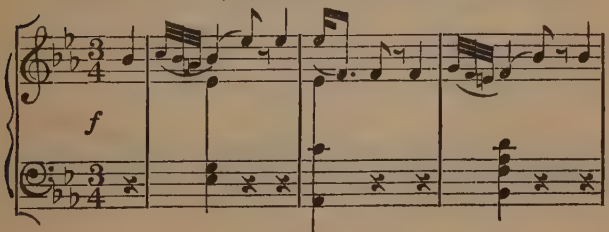
second, there is a curious dramatic effect of the original minor, by a simple addition of a melody in the oboe. The third is a jolly version of the major theme, in quick-tripping runs, with a few warm, friendly chords in the horns, to keep up the temperature. The next is heroic, somewhat *a la Chevalier Gluck;* but our hero is always making desperate attempts to stand stiffly upright; he is constantly unbending, and betraying his natural kindliness.

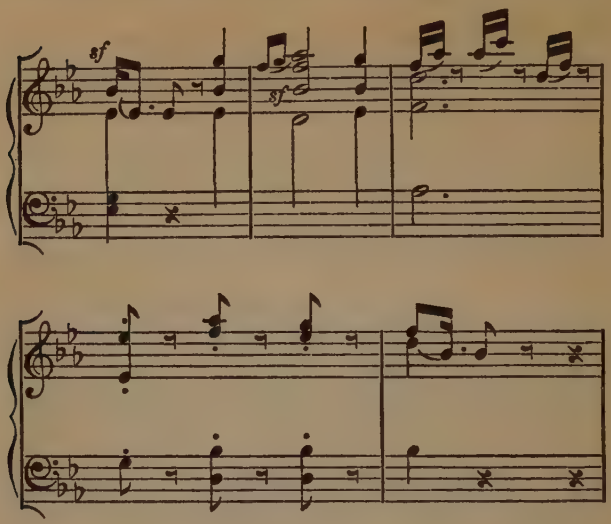
But he is doing his best to look ferocious, and the next minute he is apologizing all the more sweetly. Now the major alternative has a special pastoral feeling, with the melody in the oboes, and counterphrases in the flutes, which later join the main song.

The end is impressive. First the voices steal in one by one, making, unconscious one of the other, a harmony of four melodies. Then they spruce up, and all march in best uniform, in full pride of their combined magnificence, not without an occasional lapse into quaint naturalness of feeling.

Here, in the third movement, is the ideal minuet feeling; the dear, old-fashioned stateliness and formality; the pretty, prim quaintness, with naïve reiterations of the last phrase, high and low:

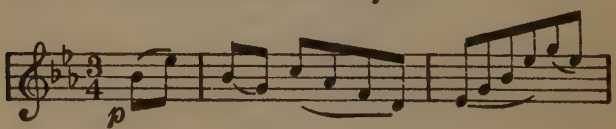
Menuetto. Tutti (the melody an octave above in the flutes).





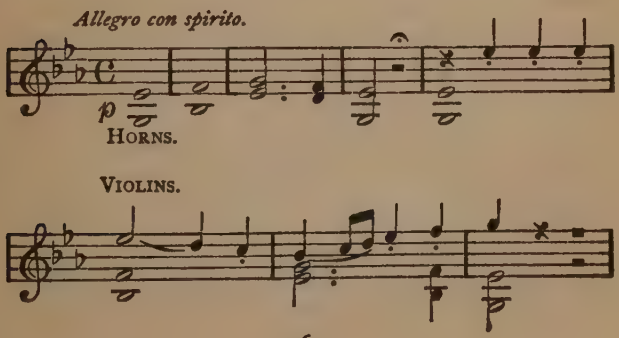
But presently it breaks into a treatment much too broad for the old minuet, where the voices, instead of strumming stiffly in rhythmic accompaniment, answer back with the theme in their own independent way.

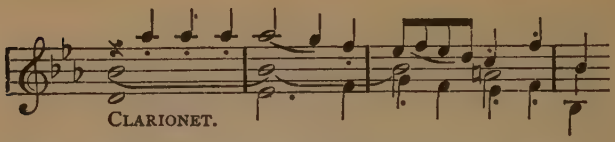
The Trio seems a flight from the restraint of the rigid dance. In a gracefully free melody, indeterminate in tune and rhythm:



the strings enter in turn, on their own sweet will. It is a little interlude in the dance; a quiet *tête-à-tête;* at the end formalities and attitudes are again assumed.

In the *Finale*, one of the broadest of Haydn's rondos, there is from the beginning a fine duality. From the first phrase there is the stamp of highest mastery. Every voice comes in with something important to say, not a mere polite accompaniment of "Yes, yes," "So say we all." So there is from the start a profundity which almost makes us fear what the climax must be. At the outset there are two distinct melodies,—one a fundamental motto in the horns, the other a gay, careless phrase in the strings:

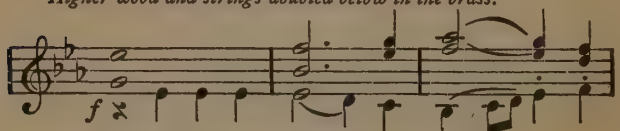




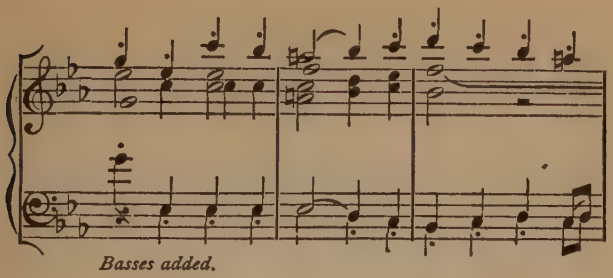
Then, while these are ringing in our ears, a third adds to the sweet bewilderment. But before the third appears, the various strings enter in "Three Blind Mice" fashion, each without waiting for the other to finish, and, what is more wonderful, they sing the answer in the same way.

Ever and again, in the true rondo spirit, the friendly motto comes, in highest simplicity. There is a big, ponderous episode, where the motto, sounded loud, does not stop in strict conclusion, but, like a philosophic proposition, deduces itself at length. The whole is like dogma solemnly proclaimed on church organ (in the bass the second melody is marching), where over all lesser interests the great truth shines and dims the others:

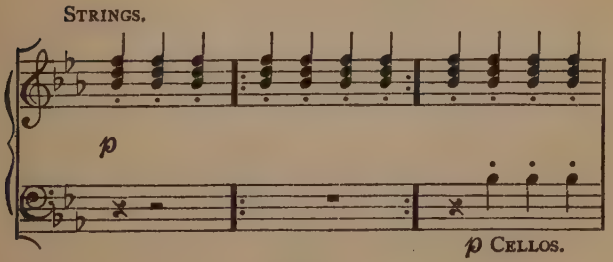
Higher wood and strings doubled below in the brass.



Cellos, violas, and fagots doubled above in clarionets.



But with Haydn this mood never lasts long; the earthly, human quickly breaks through.

To the duet of motto and melody is added a smooth-running *obligato* in strings. Presently, after a noisy close of the whole orchestra, comes what seems the gem of the whole. In simple monomelodic statement it seems entirely new, sonorously sung by the cellos, while the upper strings strike the chord:

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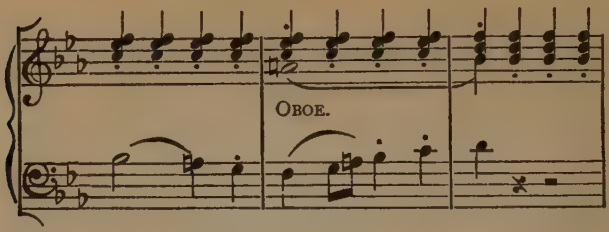
Edina, Minn.

There is a complete lyric contrast with the former dramatic polyphony. The cellos are answered by flutes, and then, again replying, soar into one of those romantic modulations which we thought were of a later master. It foreshadows clearly the poetry of Schubert's Unfinished.

Then through a noisy chorus of lesser importance by a quiet cadence, like an informal conversation, we come back to the original duet of motto and melody. But here is still more bewildering architecture, — more and more massive, overpowering, until suddenly reappears the single romantic figure in a new color of light. At the end of the phrase, however, there is something new,—the round bassoon quietly chimes a note of assent, almost too unimportant to mention; but, after all, there are two instead of one. Again the Schu-

bert modulation, that makes us think of *Erl-king* and *Death and the Maiden.* A loud acclaim brings us to our original key and beginning; again the delicious duality. But in this, the real return to the first part, everything is reinforced; all the reserves are called out; so that the first seemed but preliminary to this magnificence and to the enchanting confusion. Once more the Schubert melody. And see the number of mere strumming beats we must wait for the melody,—just so many. We must have good patience, and be ready at the exact time; otherwise we are out of tune,—a fine example of the musician, the unconscious arithmetician. Twelve meaningless strums, and then the melody, divinely ordained to come just at this moment. Now there is more beautiful duo singing in friendly quarrel.

At the end, like a blessing, the motto is broadly sounded by all the wind but the flutes, as if they really meant it as final conclusion, while the strings are loyal to their wordly counter-tune.

IV

MOZART

Until to-day, Mozart's greatness has been unquestioned. It devolves upon our generation to uphold him against voices that with faint praise or slurring epithet are seeking to relegate him to a mere historic shelf.

Mozart suggests the question which constantly arises in Art between perfect form or beauty of outline, and intensity of emotional content. Where must the stress be? Is he the greater master who charms with external beauty and cunning skill in detail,—to whom a harsh note is impossible? Or is it the poet who recklessly breaks the fetters of form, ruthlessly violates sacred canons; who shocks our ears with discord, and yet fills us with the sense of meaning, a vital feeling which impels to resolution and action. The question is perhaps not of the kind that can be answered directly. It is to some extent a matter of temperament. We can conceive of great poets of both kinds.

It is the fashion of a Romantic age to decry the Classic. The same question arises between Schumann and Mendelssohn, between Tennyson and Browning. Nor must it be solved. Rather is it important not to rush impetuously to a conclusion which unjustly excludes. Yet it bears on the question of the ultimate purpose of Art, and it may be well to take some side here. From Aristotle to a very recent time it has been thought that beauty was the one aim of Art, its creation the only function. This was more natural in an age that knew chiefly the plastic arts of sculpture and architecture. There lies the reason why the transgressions of a Beethoven were so bitterly resented. If he was not beautiful, he was nothing. Through Beethoven, mainly, it has become clear that beauty is merely the means; that the chief end of Art is the communication of feeling through the medium of works of beauty; that beauty is indispensable as test of true feeling; that high thought compels a noble utterance. But the feeling is, after all, the main end; for its expression there may be a temporary *hiatus*, a violation of æsthetic sense, in order to deepen, by contrast, the final effect. The element

of sequence, of musical sense, has arisen as paramount, if not supreme. It is clear how the same passage may be beautiful in one connection, impossible in another. Everything lies in the idea, the intent; nothing in the absolute independent beauty of separate sounds.

But, it must always be remembered, violation may never be in ignorance of rule,—only by the master who, knowing its reason and spirit, has a higher purpose in his conscious transgression of the letter.

It is certainly unquestionable that mere cunning of workmanship can never, in itself, be assurance of highest art. In so far as this is commonly the basis of Mozart's supremacy as master, we must withhold our homage. But, in reality, there is a better reason. Mozart does not stand simply for graceful perfection of detail and outline; there is expressed in his works the spirit which gives life to all this beauty, including with the humor of a Haydn something of the cosmic scope of a Shakespeare, to whom he is often likened. His very completeness of form is typical and expressive of the breadth of his sympathy. In Bach the

broadest view of the religious spirit finds utterance in the highest development of the Church style, strongest in resistance to poetic emotion. Mozart crowns the secular outburst, deepening its pathos, idealizing its humor, adding a serious, heroic note which Beethoven afterwards expanded. The symphony passed in these masters from the stage of amusement to poetic expression and the utterance of a stern message.

We remember the note of simplicity of Haydn, in natural reaction from the complexity of the Church school. It is very important to see that this in no wise suggests a lack of learning; on the contrary, that it was a purely voluntary choice of a means of expression. Simplicity was necessary to express the new secular feeling, and, furthermore, a primitive clearness was needed to convey in absolute music—the *sonata*—what had before depended upon words,—in the *cantata*. And, then, the achievement of a new form, proper to instrumental music, involved a stress on horizontal structure, at the expense of the vertical, of counterpoint.

Soon these temporal needs were filled. The

melody or *aria* was attained, with full swing and clear tonality; and, likewise, the basis of a form of wonderful fitness for the exposition and discussion of melodic thoughts. Now the note of simplicity had been rung enough. Even in Haydn we have seen a new profundity which somehow does not mar his childlike lightness. But Mozart had an altogether broader view and a profounder sense. He reflects in music the cosmic breadth and the mystic depth of his great contemporary, the poet Goethe, and of the best German thought of his time.

In Mozart the special prominence of any typical feeling is less striking than in Haydn. Therefore his music seems less characteristic. But this comes not so much from a lack of intensity as from greater breadth,—an equal intensity in various moods.

Symphony in G Minor.

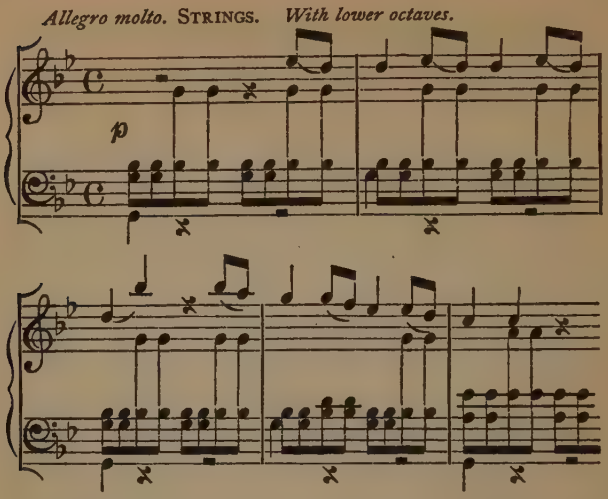
(Breitkopf and Haertel, No. 40.)

Is there anywhere more poetry or art, or more of the blending of both, than in this work of Mozart's? It is always a recurring question whether Mozart's symphonies are not

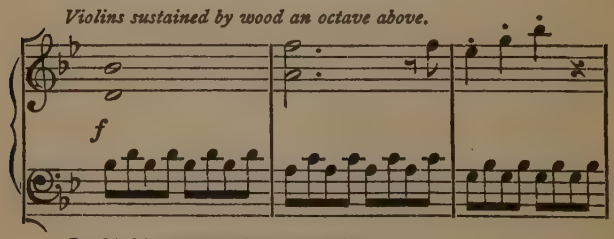
the greatest, partly because of their very simplicity, of their childlike innocence of a burden of meaning,—because of their pure beauty and formal perfection. It does seem that in this respect, of pure beauty, the G Minor is the highest of all; and beauty is, after all, paramount in the purpose of art, even in these latter days. There is a fine Hellenic lack of strife and strain, a high serenity.

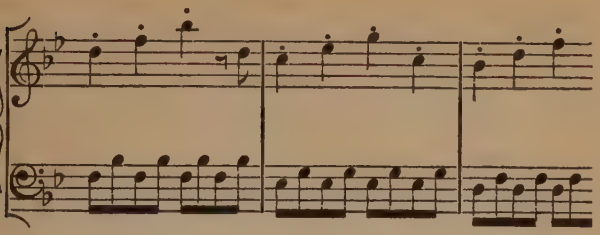
It is observable that Mozart's limitations do not appear in themselves, but only in negative comparison with other masters; and yet in this very comparison some of the highest traits appear. The true symphonic mastery is hardest to describe. It may break upon us during the course of this book. But whatever it is, Mozart certainly possessed it in a peculiar degree. His was the time when pure beauty, unalloyed with pale thought or dim meaning or grim woe, was filling men's minds. Schubert's Unfinished Symphony falls within this period.

But the special type of this phase is Mozart's G Minor, which begins with the entrancing melody, like a dashing brook in early spring, with the delicacy of gentlest rain:



There is no lack of the foil of strong melodic contrast. But the motion and sequence of the whole is so subtly perfect that we cannot stop to label the themes. Immediately after the first comes a transitional theme:





that is really more important than the regular second, because it lends the quality of stiffening lime. It is curiously noteworthy that neither of the secondary themes has any part in the discussion after the repeat of subjects, which is entirely on the text of the principal melody. It is what might be called a live counterpoint, where the bass is as individual as the soprano, a real discussion, a very logical exchange of retorts and repartees. Here we are nearer the secret of true symphonic mastery, when, after the melodies have made their rounds and courtesies, the best is yet to come.

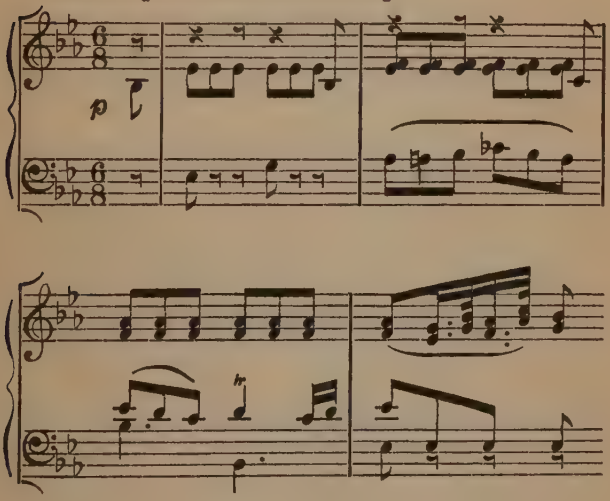
Your lyricist, who expends himself upon his melodies, worries through the period of treatment, the *Durchfuehrung*, as best he can. The master feels the real purpose of themes: for

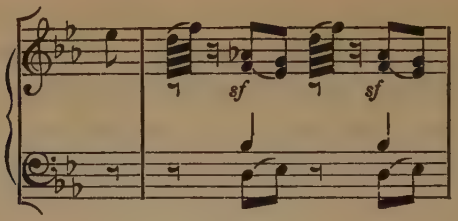
discussion. Mozart's development in the beginning *Allegro* of the G Minor is not, as in the Jupiter, peculiarly contrapuntal or architectural, but is typically a discussion. It is strange what a dogmatic, pugnacious quality appears in so graceful a theme by this alternative assertion between violins and bassos. Its peculiar beauty seems better fitted for the lighter retorts, best of all for the simple, unchallenged song, after all strife is over.

The *Andante* is in Mozart's most serious mood. Surely any musician, hearing it for the first time uninformed, would say Beethoven, which again proves Mozart's versatility and surprising depth. After all, it seems often that Beethoven in his profoundest feeling is grounded directly upon Mozart. We cannot shelve Mozart as yet. He must go down with the nineteenth century on the first line of classics. As the Finale of this symphony is prototype of Beethoven's Scherzo in the Fifth, so this Andante strikes the serious note of the slow movement of the same Beethoven symphony. And the Finale of the Jupiter has its like nowhere save, perhaps, in Brahms.

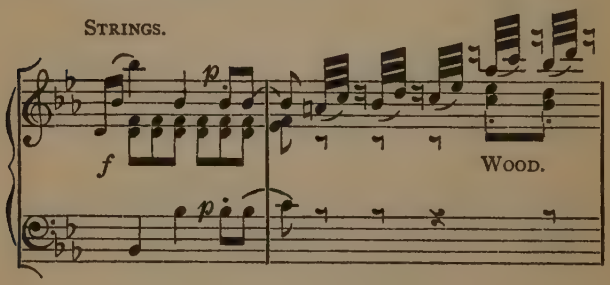
See how subtly the melody steals in, almost beyond exact quotation. It lies somewhere between the violin-voices, as they quietly enter in canon order, and the basses, in the graceful, mysterious curve of their ascent:

Andante. [IN STRINGS AND HORNS.]



But in all there is something of the prophetic sternness which we think of in Beethoven as against Mozart. To be sure, it is instantly relieved in the lighter answer:

but it is renewed with an added *ripieno* voice in the high violins over the recurring first melody.

The second melody has a tripping phrase in its constant wake,



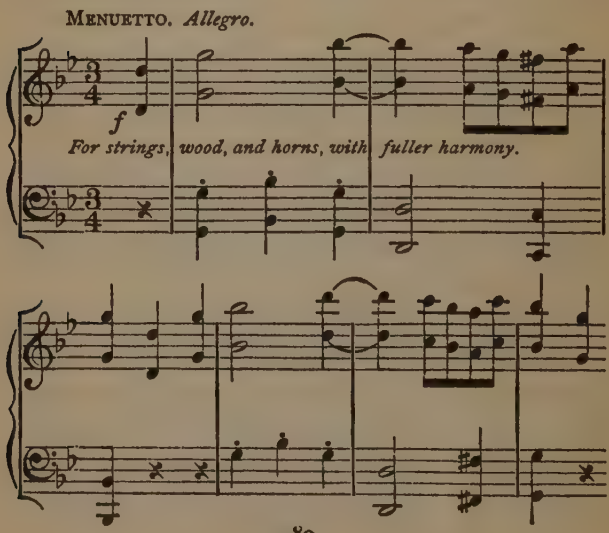
which, later, added to the first, increases the solemn complexity. It is, after all, more than mere fine art,—a broad, deep, poetic thought. Or, rather, does not, in fact, art best express the real profundity?

After the clangor of discussion, the main melody steals in with even greater solemnity. It grows ever more complex, more human, more big with meaning, significant in its many voices, its many phrases, all singing to the same end.

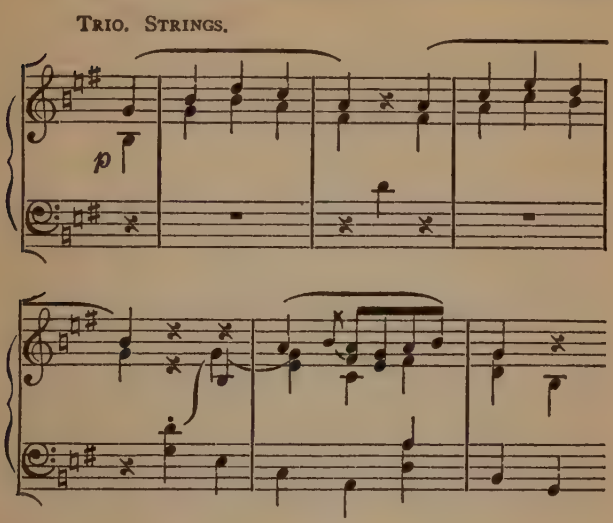
It seems almost greatest of all *Andantes*—certainly of Mozart's—in point of depth and mastery. There, as in the last movement of the Jupiter symphony, is seen how by high and profound art you approach, *ipso facto*, nearer to clear meaning,—at least, to a clear definition of the feeling. We can understand Mendelssohn's remark that music is a more exact language than prose or poetry. This must, of course, depend upon some such premises as: that the highest and best of man's thought has in it more of feeling than of dogma; that in proportion as it is more precious it is less capable of statement in set terms. As part of this musical language of feeling, *counterpoint*, such as this of Mozart's, *is like a variety of symbols or illustrations of the same idea; but they are peculiarly reinforcing, as they are simultaneous, and harmonious in the beauty of their union.*

It seems as if Mozart must have lived in

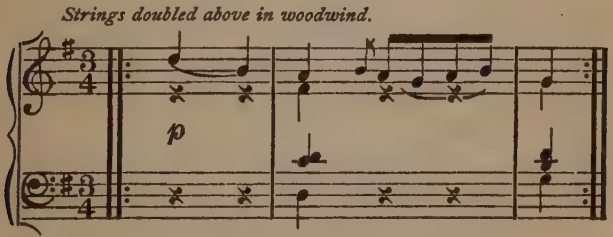
these six weeks, in which he wrote his three greatest works, as never before or after. Are we curious what his thoughts were? The true answer is here, in the symphonies themselves, —far better than any verbal account that even he himself could give. And this only leads us back to the discussion we thought we had just taken leave of.

With all the bright humor of the *Menuetto*, what a masterful ring! A kind of Titans' dance, perfect in its easy, heavy, strange

rhythm,—lacking grace only if lightness be necessary.

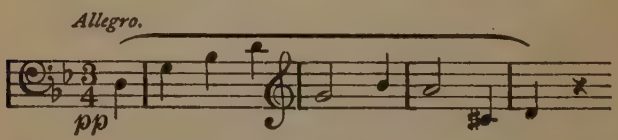
And then at last—in the Trio—the purely



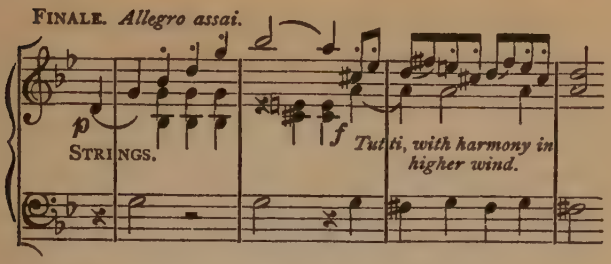
human, all tenderness, delicacy, especially in the dainty ending:

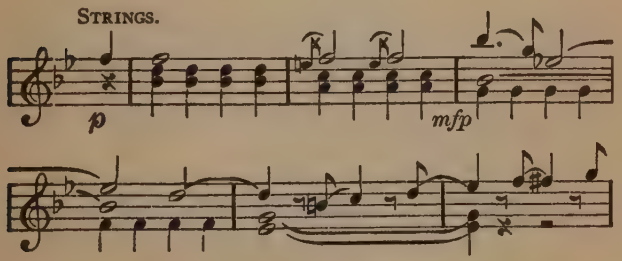


The coincidence has often been mentioned between the theme of this Finale and that of Beethoven's Scherzo in the Fifth Symphony.* It is, to be sure, exact in the first eight notes, disregarding the rhythm. But here is our opportunity. With all the literal similarity there is an absolute unlikeness in essence. This shows many things, and, first, the wrongness of our literal way of looking at music, as if a man could have a monopoly or patent on a succession of notes merely because he was first to light upon them. It shows, too, how the essence of music is different from the common belief: how it is purely one of mood and feeling. The Beethoven theme, with the grim irony of the dance-step (to quote, for the nonce, in another key), is in austerest, sardonic



humor. In Mozart, in "common time," it is purest playfulness. Of what use, if we know the notes, can quote or even play them, if we

* See the description and quotation below.

lack the perception of feeling which makes identical themes really antipodal. With Mozart, it is all a jolly, wild revel of childlike joy, well earned after the profound, serious absorption of the earlier symphony. After the depths of the *Weltschmerz*, after big thoughts of a universe, it is good to be dancing, like pure children. So the second melody is in simplest Haydn humor.



Was there ever anything so brilliant as the development. Pompous, eccentric striding

about, as if terrible things were impending, and then—the most impish dancing under the very noses of the same figures that looked so solemn. But soon the imps get in a wild maze of dance. We are dizzy looking at them; we can no longer follow the leader. Each seems independent of all the rest, yet they never even jostle. Somehow, they all make a perfect picture; they seem to dance as a curious, complex whole, a simulation of wild disorder. Gradually they simmer down to a lull. It all ends in the joyous simplicity of the beginning.

The G Minor does seem the greatest of all symphonies—when we hear it. But, then, it is really the test of a symphony that you prefer it to all others when you hear it, and this must be an excuse for a subjective treatment. There is a right and wrong, a false and true in art, but there is no necessary gradation in rank of the masterpieces.

The "Jupiter" Symphony, in C Major.

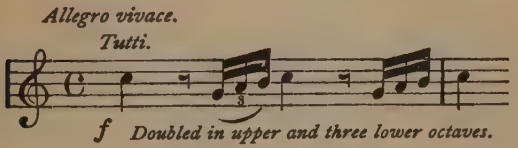
(No. 41 of Breitkopf and Haertel.)

Were Mozart and Haydn as conscious of the high dignity and capacity of the symphony

as Beethoven? They worked towards it, but they were, in a sense, still in the formative period. But this was, again, their strength, both in point of unconsciousness and of formal beauty.

The contrast is very complete from the G Minor. We miss the fine depth of sentiment. But instead there is a certain intellectual breadth, profundity, and vigor. In nothing is the contrast sharper than in the general plan. We have seen the early climax of the G Minor, and the gentle descent in the Finale. In the Jupiter the first three movements seem mere prelude of the last.

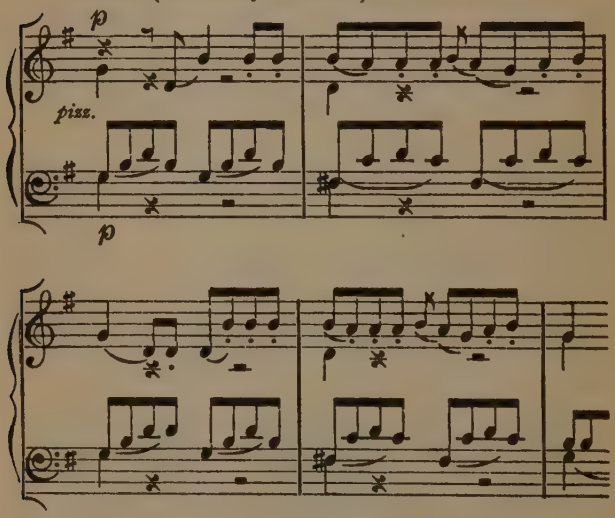
The first, *Allegro Vivace*, begins with an electric burst of the whole orchestra in a sparkling phrase, which with its inversions seems to unite the whole symphony in a common conception.



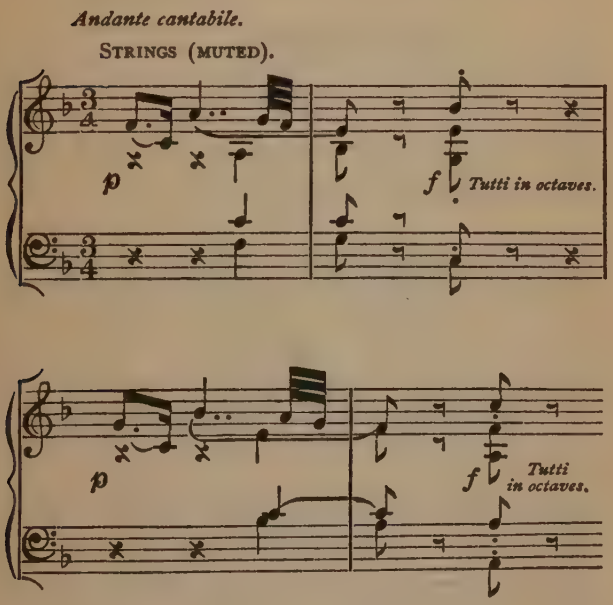
There is no defined melody. It is all like a broad *fanfare*, to show the breadth of scope

and the intellectual pitch of the whole. There is a constant tendency to short, terse legends in tone. Not until the keen air of the original key is forsaken is there a lapse into gently swinging melodies, of which the second, in particular, is a grateful gliding into a more placid, a more human, perhaps a more frivolous mood.

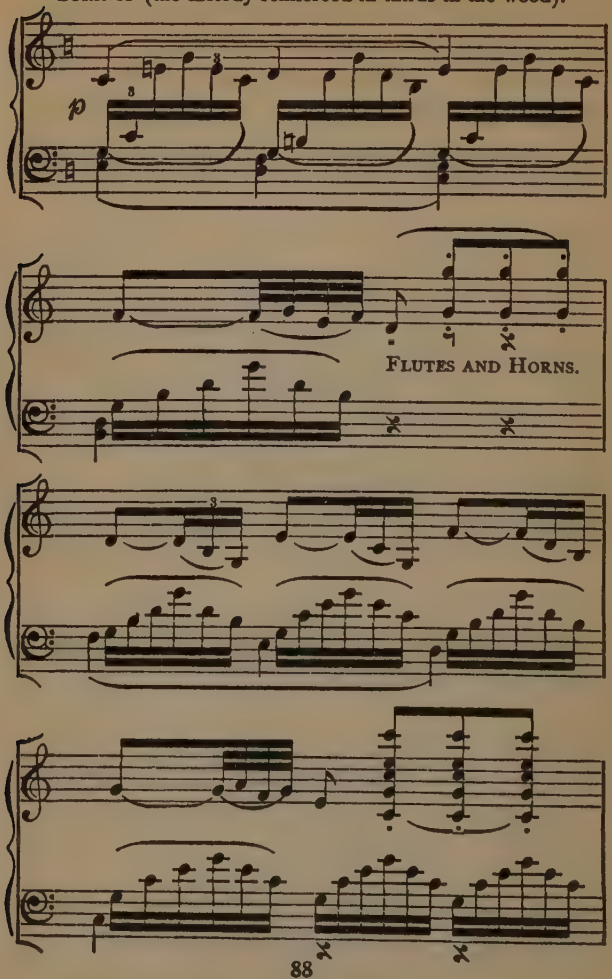
STRINGS (the melody in octaves).



But the development begins in light humor, with charming counterpoint. And this shows

an innocence of anything profounder than a vague cheeriness. Neither the first nor second movement has the profound feeling of the G Minor. But the whole symphony deepens as it proceeds. And so in the Andante, as the first theme is rather formal and stately in

its mood, the second is fairly steeped in sentiment:

STRINGS (the melody reinforced in thirds in the wood).

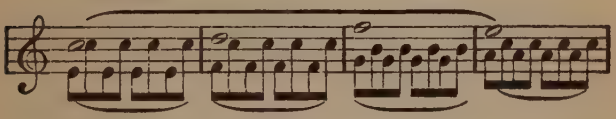


There begins the real song,—the poetry of the story; and from this point the treatment of the first theme is richer and fuller.

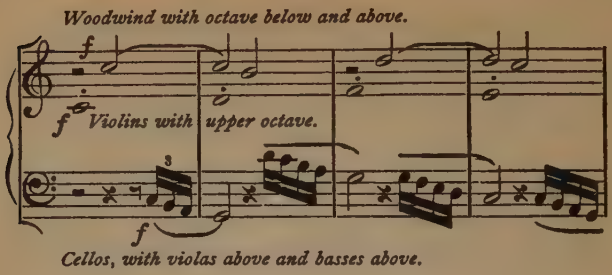
The *Menuetto*, with all its charm of lightness and dainty swing, cannot compare with that of the G Minor in vigor or depth. It is a pure dance, while the other was more than was bargained for.

But in the *Finale*, the reverse of the G Minor, there is the most thrilling architecture, all out of a theme of four notes, united, augmented,

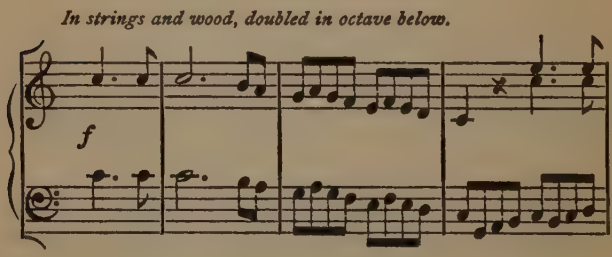
FINALE. *Allegro molto.*
STRINGS.



diminished. The vagueness of the first movement is justified; the whole is with a broadly poetic conception, which is really much more Greek than Gothic. There is *Jupiter Tonans*. The view is always Olympian and manifold, taking on a great cosmic complexity. In the wake of the main subject come other phrases. One in the bass recalls the beginning of the whole work:

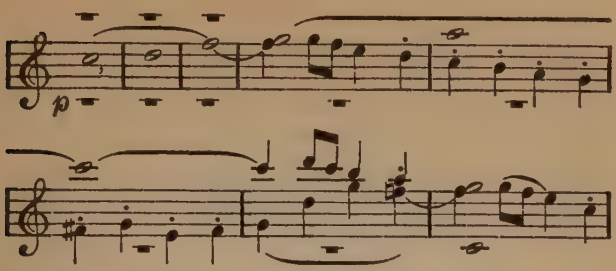


After a full cadence rings out what has been called the "hammer theme,"—might be called the "thunderer:"

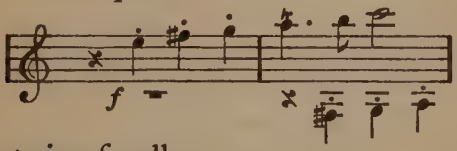


carried on in two voices, one a third above the other.

At the end of this rumbling energy in the forge of the gods comes a fugal fabric in five separate voices from the strings on the motto, sung in quiet fancy, each entering voice shutting off the last word of its forerunner, thus:

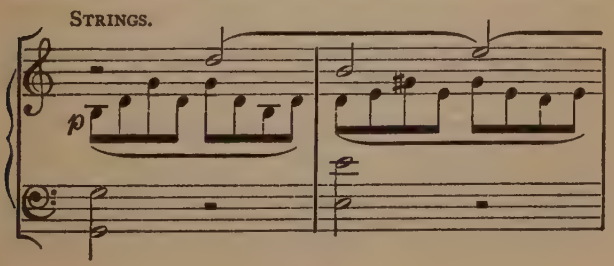


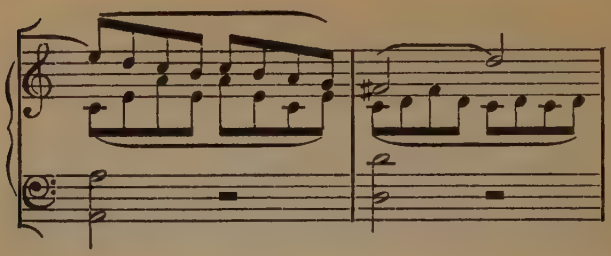
so all the violins come in, from first to basso. Then echoes the blast of the full orchestra, with the theme above and the hammer phrase below. Then a new counter-figure of importance is developed:



also entering fugally.

Then comes the sudden change to the gentle second melody, still in the violins. But, see,





it is of the same flesh and bone with the first, a stolen rib. Around its disguised entrance the former phrases are constantly hovering.

Presently there is a compact forceful passage in the (inverted) second theme, without a moment's loss of melodic swing, without a suspicion of the lamp; on the contrary, with constantly added strength and vigor, and a peculiar sense of economy and mathematical perfection, so that we cannot but recall the "unconscious arithmetician." Now follows the most royal counterpoint, the sparks flying from the shock of discord, all with surest touch and perfect harmony.

The development (*Durchfuehrung*) begins more reflectively. But the counterpoint is so dazzling, so overwhelming, that only by intense expectancy, looking again and again, the

sunlight is too bright, you can discern the components, shading the eyes and standing farther back. But perhaps the general dazzle is the real intent, rather than spelling out each theme. A wonderful work, with the stunning alternative of hammer themes in contrary motion, and a subtle insinuation of the motto! At last the motto appears boldly in its original guise in the basses, with enchanting, Schubert-like modulation from mystery to certainty.

At the end, after a *reprise* in the respective keys, there is the most marvellous episode of all. The motto, inversion, and diminution in one, and the other two themes, all in perfect harmony, are enough to give Bach a headache. There is an unquenchable thirst for new statements, new guises. The conception is of the boldest intellectual span. It stamps Mozart's as one of the most broadly constructive minds the world has possessed. It is indeed the *ne plus ultra* of Art.

V

BEETHOVEN

Two great traits stand out as we view the advance over the masters we have been considering, by the one who stands at the height of secular expression, if not of all.

To use technical words seems like travelling in a circle; for they must always be explained. Yet there is a certain indispensable rough convenience about them. *Development*, then, is, after all, that which gives life and reality to music, as to all human thought. It seems sometimes as if any one could make a tune by thinking hard enough or long enough. Then, melody may be reminiscent; it is always partly so. But if you can talk with sequence and coherence, you are a master of the magic language; it is, then, all your own. Bother the theme,—you can say something logically, deductively, consecutively.

This Beethoven carried to an undreamt power; Schumann developed it later wonder-

fully in certain narrower lines. Sometimes it seems as if, by comparison, Haydn and Mozart tied the melodic sections together; or used the devices of counterpoint, however masterfully, for their own sake; or, at least, while they wrote with sequence, they did so with a certain consciousness, with more emphasis on utterance than on content. In Beethoven, for the first time, everything becomes subordinate to the expression of a great, continuous, homogeneous thought or feeling. Still, in all justice, certain fundamental differences of the masters must be reckoned with. Mozart liked perfection of form in itself; he had a keener sense than Beethoven for the beauty of the utterance. He did not, therefore, like Beethoven, rebel against form for the sake of rebelling. There may possibly be a tendency to consider each succeeding master too distinctly as overshadowing those before him. Mozart and Beethoven were diametrically opposite in temperament, and the former is not merely a stepping-stone to the latter. In certain moods, Mozart reaches an expression than which a more perfect cannot be imagined. But in reality and force of passion, Beethoven undoubtedly far surpassed him.

The first trait seems to lead immediately to the second, though at first glance they do not seem so closely akin. In other words, it is *Meaning* which now becomes more important than *Beauty* in itself. Beethoven first became less conscious of the dignity of detail than of the general plan or mood-purpose. In Beethoven we first see the gray hue of a distinct significance; or, better, perhaps, of a defined kind of feeling, instead of the vague prattling of Haydn and Mozart. The latter were content to be in an irresponsible, joyous state, or else they had the tears ready. They accepted their fate, their surroundings, their institutions unmurmuringly. They remained little above menials in the houses of the nobility. They were content, like good children, to be happy out of doors, in the woods and meadows; to go to the established church and sing its service; to obey the authorities,—glad to be allowed their wages, to please their patrons. They were in the Grubb Street stage of music. To be sure, at times there were, in the younger, moments of solemn wandering, even of bold revel. But this, too, was in the established order.

Now comes a man, a counter-figure, only nobler, of that other man of the time across the Rhine, whom the former celebrated in a symphony. But in their high loyalty to his ideals, the works of Beethoven, as compared with the degeneration of Napoleon, show something of the nobility of art as compared with statesmanship.

Beethoven was *first* a thinking man. He took seriously himself, his surroundings, and institutions, social and political. In deed and fact he was true to the ideal of his thought. He recognized the real mission of art—but slowly dawning upon us—to utter the highest, profoundest emotions only *by means* of beauty of expression. He dethroned Beauty and set up Feeling. Thus for himself and for art he achieved the energy, the power, which rouses to action, does not lull to sleep.

His personal behavior betrayed his temper, not innocent of rudeness, when he completely reversed the accustomed relations of the nobility and the artist. Politically, he was in strongest sympathy with the struggles in France for individual freedom, for the principles on which stand our American republic and na-

tional life. This was the prompting motive of the *Eroica* Symphony. Napoleon then was the champion of Justice, Equality, Democracy, Common Sense, even of Universal Brotherhood. What Schiller dreamed in his "*Freude*," here was thought a heavenly reality. Thus Beethoven found in the opposite sphere of action the echoing voice to his half-conscious mutterings and rebellion against the tawdry and tyrannous feudal system, under which the European continent languished. In the Fifth Symphony is, perhaps, most distinctly the utterance of this spirit; though, wherever Beethoven boldly and knowingly breaks the fetters of form, he shows by unconscious analogy the quality of his democratic, iconoclastic temper.

Before proceeding to the symphonies themselves, it is necessary to touch on the true limits of meaning in music. We are apt today to become supercilious about "programme music." Its nobility lies in the fact that the inner content rises superior to the outward beauty. But the question is as to this meaning. As it was once thought translatable into human prose, the language of commonplace, useless

for permanent things, and as it was found wanting, the reaction was natural to the modern theory of an Hanslick: that music is a mere whimsical combination of tonal figures without inner content or significance.

The meaning is certainly there, and it is the true kernel; but it is an emotional, not an intellectual meaning,—the kind that is the essence of poetry, religion, and all good things in the world,—the personal element which makes affection. And no other form of utterance is so powerful for its expression as is music. In reality, it seems to exist least where there is most intellectual meaning, as in a treatise, perfect in logic.

But the danger of seeking an exact meaning in music is great. Of the two errors, the negative attitude is infinitely the safer; it at least brings no ridicule upon the art. As we have said before, the true essence of music is its unconscious subjective betrayal of a dominating emotion, in contrast with the conscious, objective depiction in poetry and in the plastic arts. And it is in this unconsciousness that lies its overwhelming strength.

Symphony No. 3, in E♭ (Eroica).

Much has been said by critics to reconcile Beethoven's inscription "to celebrate the memory of a great man," to explain the apparent irrelevance of the *Scherzo* and *Finale.* They cannot see the fitness of humor and triumph after the funeral. Marx sees pictures of a busy camp and "the joys of peace." Berlioz finds in the Scherzo the solemn rites of Greek warriors at the grave of their leader. If you must have a scenic whole, Wagner's is the best,—Action, Tragedy, Serenity, Love.*

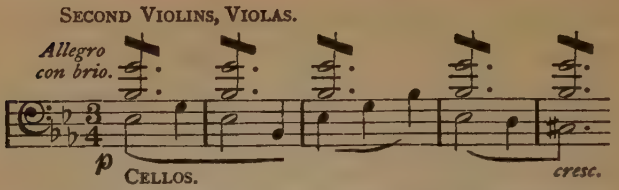
It seems clear that all the commentators insisted on a series of pictures; they must be told a story about each movement. No work could be fitter to test the true limits of meaning in music. Taking a natural view of the composer's attitude, he wrote, in the first place, a symphony (not a series of illustrations, not a narrative), of which the burden was A Great Man. All pictorial or narrative association must be abandoned, even of a chronological order. It is a symphony with the dominating

* A good account of the various interpretations is given in Upton's "Standard Symphonies."

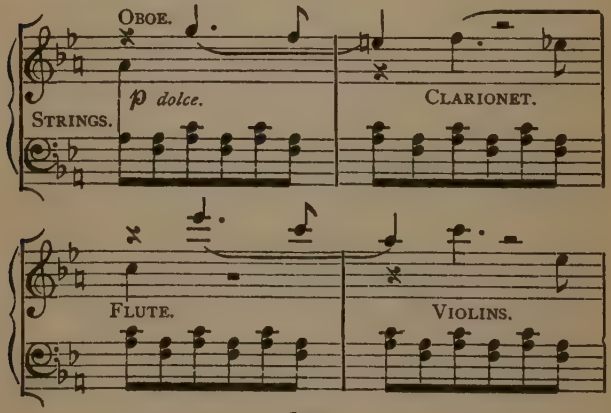
feeling of a *Hero*, in its various moods. His death was, after all, as an event, a small element. The song of mourning must come, if at all, in the second movement, not merely according to tradition, but by the highest sense of fitness. In the whole "celebration" the mourning note must be subordinate. It is somewhat the thought of Hawthorne that death is an incident of our lives of far less importance than many a thought of an uneventful day. The lightness of rhythm of the Scherzo only gives the touch of highest joy, opening into the triumphant Finale.

In the dangerous task of technical description, the question is, How close is the relation between music and meaning? In proportion to greatness it seems that the conception is apart from the details. In lesser masters there is little below the sound. With the great you must stand off as from a canvas of larger scope; you must not be too near the individual figures to catch the general plan.

While the beginning is almost graceful, the serious intent is soon disclosed where the orchestra enters united; the dance of the violins



ceases in the abrupt, severe *tutti* chords, with a rough syncopation which we think original in Brahms. Still, this may be a temporary contrast. The question is which is to predominate. Then the melody sounds solemnly in united basses and trebles, with full orchestra; but suddenly it drops all severity in the gliding grace of the second melody, which is sung in successive and responsive snatches by the wood-wind and strings:



There is certainly nothing here but careless serenity, whatever the title, the warning sound of the first melody, and other omens may threaten. Throughout there seems to be a tense balance or rivalry between solemn foreboding and exultant dance, predominating respectively in the two melodies in a constant struggle, so uncertain that one is often in a curious mixture of terror and joy, save in occasional climaxes of clear triumph or in cadences of idyllic tranquillity.

If we remember the *raison d'être* of the sonata form,* we must see that the first statement of melodies must in itself give a strong clue to the whole symphony. In its clear enunciation, coming to a full emphatic close, followed by a complete repetition, it must be a prologue, as it were; nay more, as it contains the substance of the most important of the four chapters. And so in this strange vibrating between exuberance and seriousness, this curious balance between childlike abandon and succeeding vigorous, even harsh, solemnity and profundity is the typical feeling of the *Heroic* symphony.

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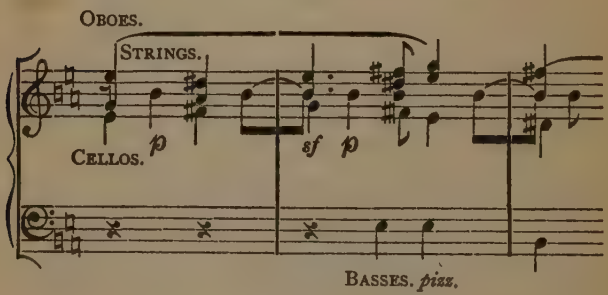
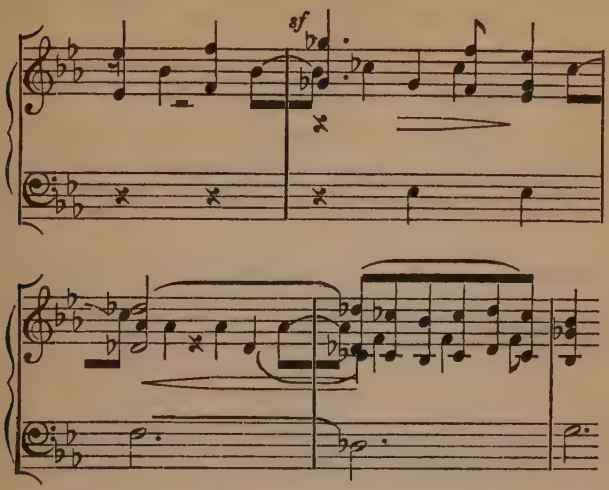
* See Chapter II.

After the joyous and boisterous appearance of the two melodies enters the ominous mystery of modulation, uncertain whispering of fragments of the themes, followed by brief tranquillity in the second melody. Then gloomy minor mutterings of the first in the bass, increasing and reiterating like some fundamental fate, with fitful, hysterical breaking into the lightness of the second. But its own theme is bent to serve the stern humor of the whole; and soon the whole orchestra is striking united hammer-blows in eccentric rhythm with overwhelming power, until suddenly relieved by a phrase of delicate pathos in the woodwind, with violins still sustaining the rhythm:

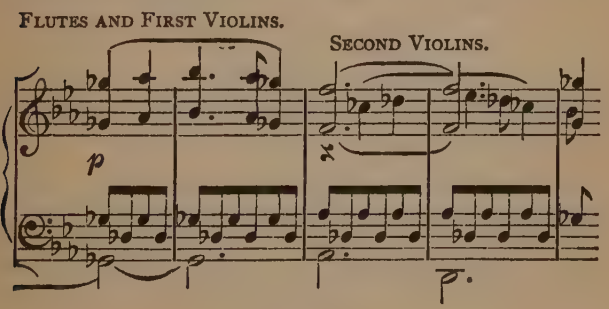


Back again to the fateful legend in the basses, reiterated in minor, suddenly relieved again, as

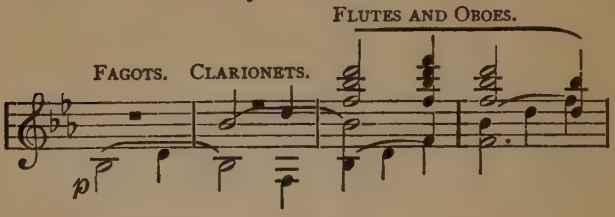
before. But the new phrase expands in clarionets and fagots



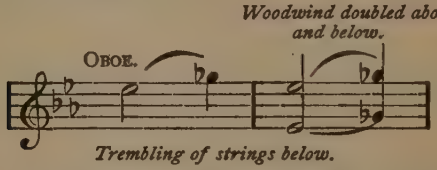
into a new song, sung responsively between flutes and violins:

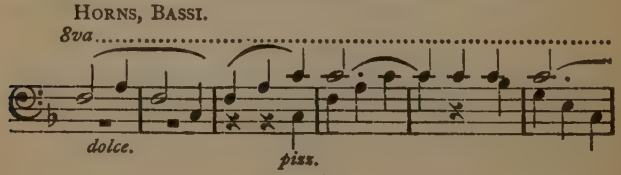


Now comes the real discussion of the main subject, the vigorous strife in clear *stretto* of woodwind, with rhythmic stress:



too mazed for our sight, until it is merely the light oboe striking the phrase with resounding echo of the rest:



Then more hammer-blows on the chord, suddenly quieting before the melody, entering simply and cheerfully as at first. But here is a sudden serene humor for our moody subject in jolliest duet between horns and basses:

with the other strings humming away to the dancing rhythm; the duet is taken up by flutes and violins, then through loud cadence into a return to the first part of the movement, with all its themes and phrases, principal and secondary, and its changing moods, enriched with fuller treatment.

Withal there is the elemental simplicity and childlike exuberance of Beethoven. It is wrong to think him o'ercast with intellectual motives. At once he seems charged with profoundest emotion and lightest joy. It is the balance of depth and of humanity that makes Beethoven great. All doubt of the mood of the *Allegro* is gone with the audacious descent in three succeeding chords *en bloc*, defying the laws of musical progression, and in this defiance showing the intent.* Though often done afterwards, it never had the same Promethean ring.

Immediately thereafter is dancing revel and a serious joy, though with greatest lightness. The whole understanding of the Third Sym-

* Yet the musician feels how the spirit of his law is not disturbed.

phony depends upon distinguishing profound joy, even with wild revel, from a careless, irresponsible abandon,—the joy of the Hero in an universal cause, who, in his revel, feels a clear right to his exultation.

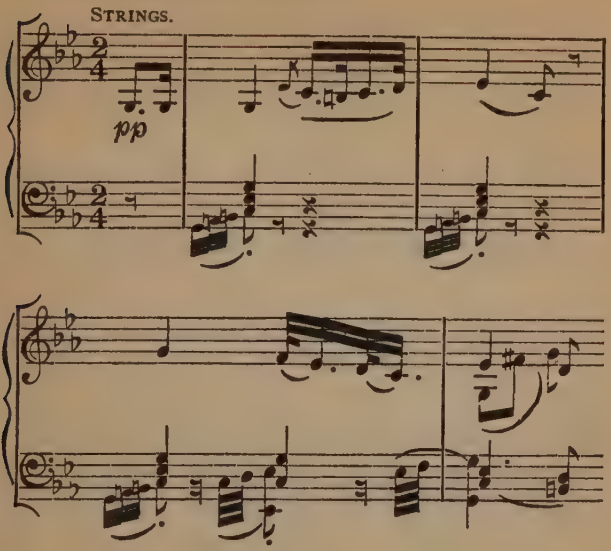
The intensity of Beethoven's feeling in his conception of Napoleon's ideals may be measured by the reaction, when he tore up the title-page on hearing of the emperor's coronation.

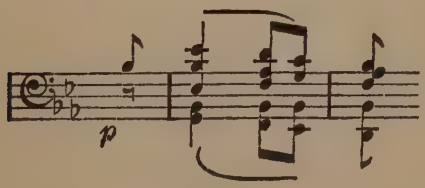
In the second movement, the *Funeral March*, he would go far astray who would listen merely for the main melody. It is a fine illustration of the relative unimportance in high art of the melody in itself. Throughout we are disappointed, if we tie our interest to mere melodic beauty here and there. The greatness lies somehow in the exalted tone, in the symbolic depth and unity to which the melodic details are quite subordinate, although they are of course the integral elements of the whole. So it is truly a symphonic work.

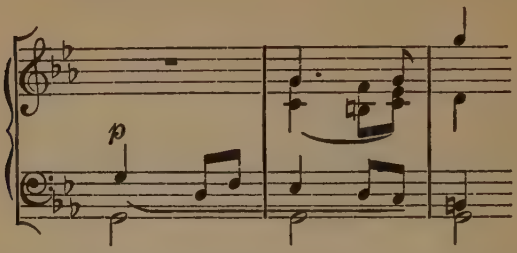
The initial melody, all in the strings, is evidently designed less for its individual, independent effect than for its fitness with the whole plan.

MARCIA FUNEBRE. *Adagio assai.*

STRINGS.

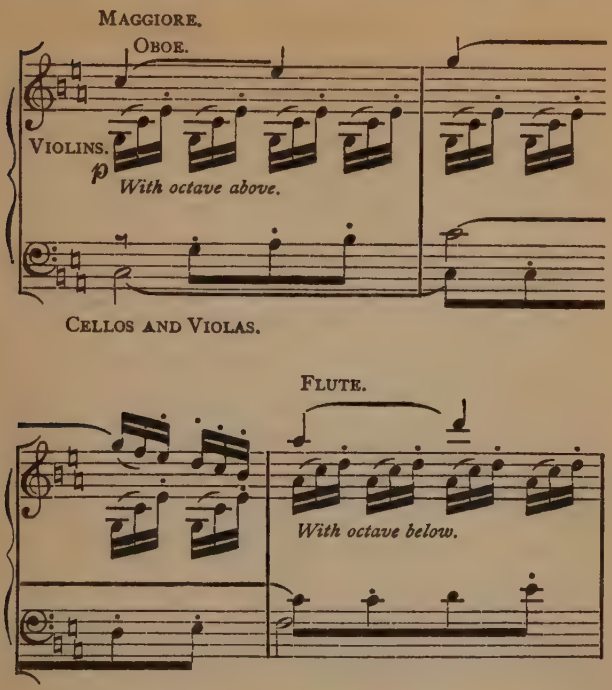


After it is rehearsed by the whole chorus, comes the first of those smoothly gliding, soothing episodes, which are almost more beautiful than the subject itself, in the phrase

after a climax, descending by another gentle motive, sung responsively by strings:



breaking into the funeral march proper, as at first; but while the drum-beats go on, the gliding phrases are mainly sung, soothing the sorrow of the stiffly solemn subject. After another climax of the latter is a striking contrast: of quietest even gliding of strings, followed by sharpest clang of the wind and dull beating of drums.

The first part, in minor, of course closes distinctly. The *Maggiore*, in C major, is at first mysterious. What is this serene moving of oboe in one phrase, succeeded by the flute, with *violas* and *cellos* in another, of evenest rhythm, while the violins are humming in simplest strumming of pastoral placidity? It

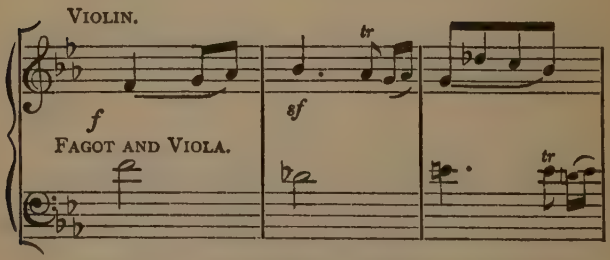


would be cheerful, but for the complexity of the polyphony. Before eight bars comes an overpowering crash of whole orchestra, followed again by the former quiet, self-contained singing of joint voices, now serenely continuing, with no funereal strain save the beating of drums, with very gradual climax into the

former crash. But with all the awfulness, the startling terror has been avoided.

It is surely clear. We are lifted away from the objective grief of mourning into the empyrean of a subjective exaltation of the Hero. After all, the mourning is not for him; for him there is naught but serenity and triumph.

Back to the thud of drums and the awe of the original minor. But only for a strain. Here is the profoundest of all, whether technically or in its general meaning. Fagot and violin strike out in noisy, dogmatic counterpoint on dimly familiar themes, of which the most important must be the sombre guise (in minor) of one of the former quietly gliding phrases:



In succession, all the voices strike into the fateful chant. When the basses have it, we are overwhelmed as in a cathedral with the

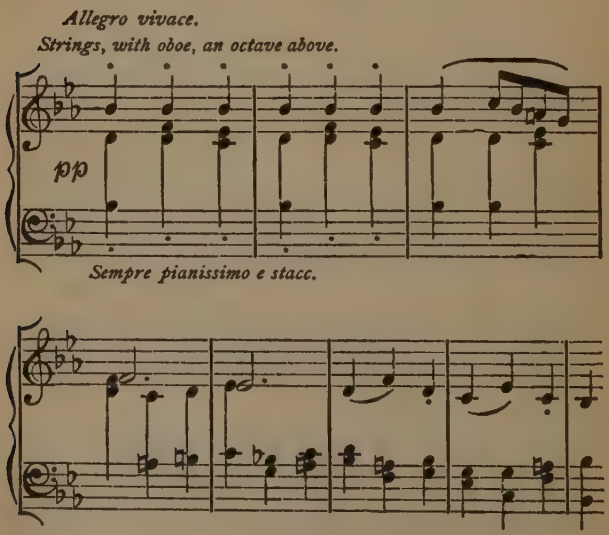
convincing mass of its awing architecture. In its closing climax the now hurried phrase is nothing but the old theme doubled in time. It is all surely a mingling of the feeling of Religion, of the deep enigma, in all this complexity; of life and death, and life thereafter. But the lull and return to the Funeral March is but for a moment. After a wail of violins in the main melody, brass and strings strike crashing into a strange chord. Again enters in the bass a reminder of the dogmatic theme carried on and on, until suddenly we hear in its very climax the original funeral melody marching in the woodwind, quite as if a secondary after-thought, all in complete song. The rest is as at first, but enriched and extended, with former separate themes now united in common pæan, with bolder acclaim of rhythmic strings. Where the end might be there is a sudden lull. In quietest song is a new melody with new swing. In its novelty, its strange simplicity, it suggests a feeling of transfiguration or apotheosis of the Hero.

The ending is solemn and subdued, save a single triumphant burst at the last. There is a curious touch in the final singing of the melody,

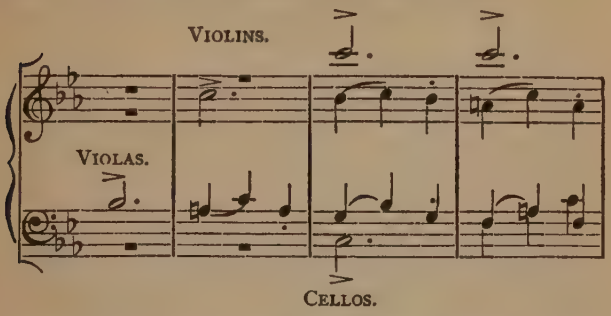
with its original rhythm all distorted. It gives a strange effect of reality, as if the essence of the poetry, spoken without the flesh.

In the Scherzo, *Allegro Vivace*, we must not pretend to find anything but boisterous abandon. There is no note of the sombre, of the sinister, save possibly a suggestion of terror in the very vehemence of the mad delight.

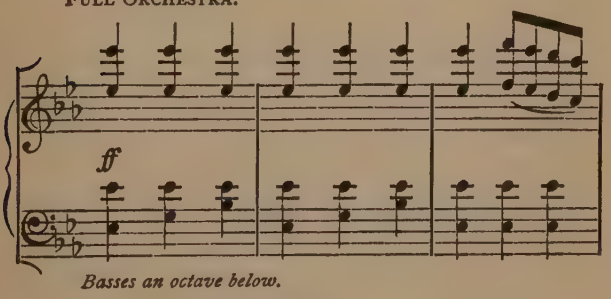
The beginning seems all mere rhythmic preparation in the *staccato* strings until first violins and oboe break into the melody:

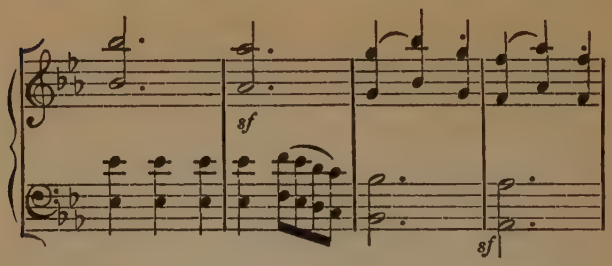


The low strumming of the first bass is surely mere foil to the bright humor of the main theme. The fine haste of the incessant tripping, a sort of *perpetuum mobile*, is enhanced when the voices leap one over the other in canon form:

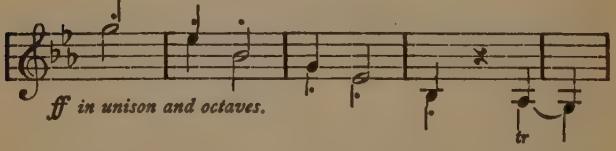


overturning melodies head over heels, losing accent in their mad haste. And, later, a still more splendid *stretto*, in whole orchestra, between the measures of trebles and of basses:





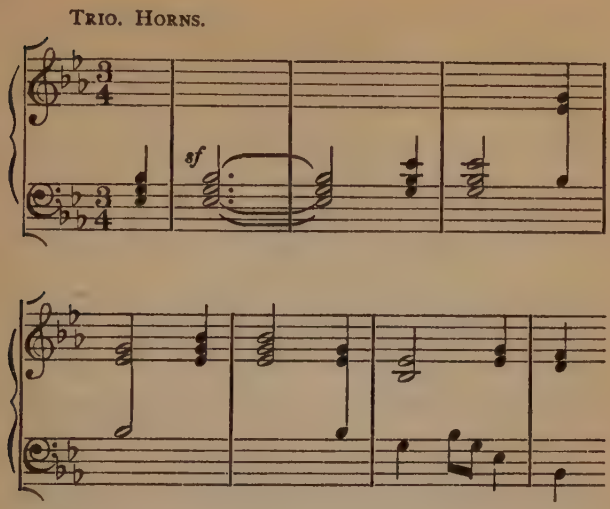
higher and higher in the chasing game, until they all fall together in headlong rhythm:



On their feet again and off tripping as before. No depth or complexity, save quite incidentally where the simultaneous phrases of first and second violins were reversed, the lower above the higher,—a master-stroke (what the scholars call double counterpoint), all quickly in passing.

The TRIO accents the deeper humor in a horn melody that savors unmistakably of the chase.

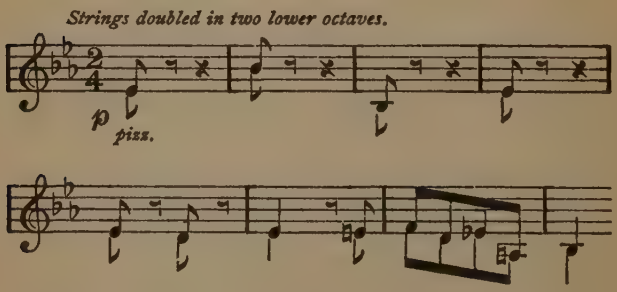
But its sustained tones only imply the pre-



vious rhythm, and soon run into its wild gait; back again into the sonorous horn theme,—finally occasional lapses, as if sighing for a moment's thought before the Scherzo, which rushes past with the same melodies in close texture extended in a coda, where we are hovering uncertain between humor and serious triumph.

There can be no question about the mood of the Finale, *Allegro molto.* We need not speculate nor philosophize deeply, yet there is a rare chance for a mistake.

There is no doubt about the unreined joyous elation of the whole. And yet it is most natural at first hearing to find nothing profounder than lightest romp and revel. But there is no music where there is closer relation between the notes and the sense, this higher content. Therefore, with no more ado to the reading. The opening bars are of course a mere *fanfare* of strings in preparatory (dominant) chord for the melody (in the tonic). What a strange theme! All in *pizzicato*, unison strings:

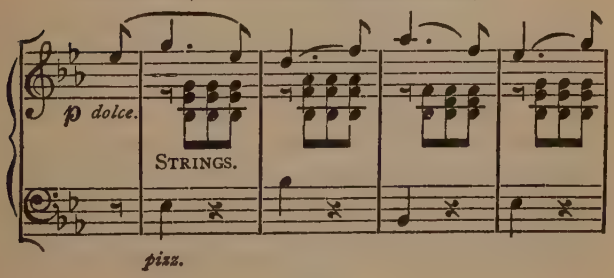
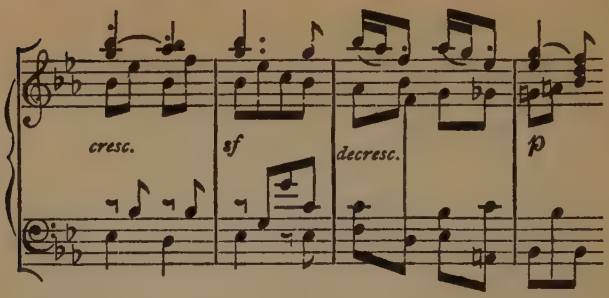


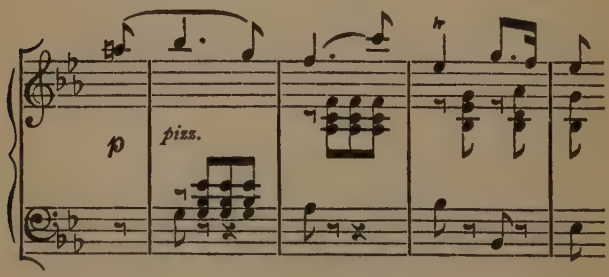
almost a jest in its simplicity, and repeated in eccentric echoing of woodwind, and ended with comic, loud striking of common note, and lightly tripping off with the same stealthy pace.

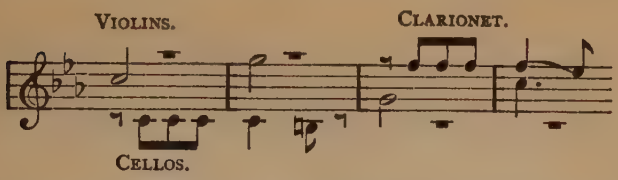
Next the melody is sounded by one set of strings in sustained half-notes, instead of timid *staccato*, while the others dance about with snatches and phrases which seem to fit as well above the melody as below. We now see the deeper design which gradually breaks on us, that lends a profounder dignity,—a feeling of completeness, of universality. And yet the design is not conscious, but that curious star-guided intention of the master. And the unconsciousness but gives it the greater dignity and meaning.

What seemed the main melody is now relegated to insignificant basses, and a new chrysalis of tune gently dances aloft in wood-wind, reckless of its dethroned predecessor under its feet:

WOODWIND (with a running figure in violins).



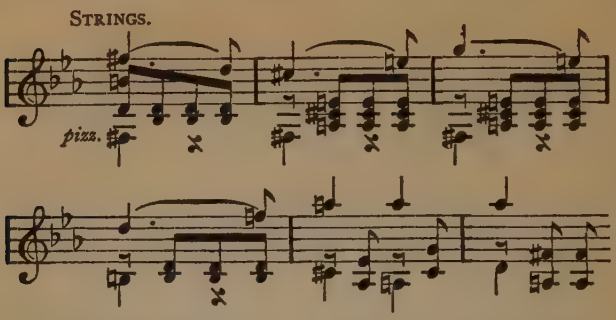
There is no mere reminiscent pretence, but the whole melody with the second above, the answer, even, with the heavy chords, and the final phrase

all in heaven-made union. But now the original theme is restored to dignity as sonorous subject of serious fugue, with the surrounding phrases which give life to the rhythm:



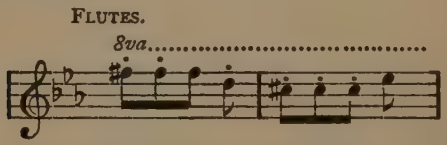
through the four strings down to the fundamental bassi, with attempts of woodwind to have their say.

It is clear that the theme has that peculiar quality of basic motto which we saw in the *Finale* of the Jupiter, and which we shall see further in Beethoven's symphonies. In it the masters expressed the sense of profound groping for fundamental truth which is strong in their compatriot and contemporary poets, which gave that peculiar charm and strength of blended philosophy and fancy to the works of Goethe.

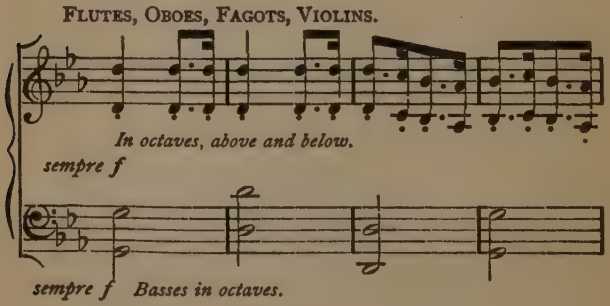
The plot thickens as the theme enters diminished in *tempo* and in close *stretto*,—still further diminished, and we wonder what comes next in the maze, when suddenly out of the sombre dogmatic learning dances forth, like fairy queen, with quick surprise of modulation, the second melody in a minor key, where it loses none of its lightness, gaining a novel charm of mystery:



rehearsed with daintily comic change of rhythm in woodwind:

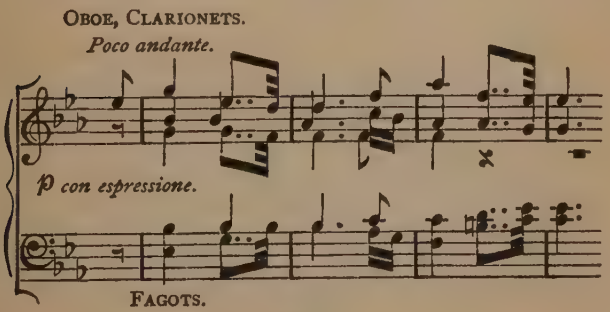


After some clownish horseplay in the strings, applauded by the rest, all join in a big, ponderous cosmic dance:



cosmic because of its primeval simplicity, and because we hear the same fundamental motto in the basses.

It has somehow the spirit and ring of universality of Schiller's Ode to Joy, proven in its simple completeness. The new dance extends its melody, with the motto both above and below, coming to what seems a complete close of full orchestra. But suddenly off again into unexpected regions of tone on the wings of the second melody, then into the mysterious phases of the minor, the motto always present above or below. Once more we are in the fugue, in the dogmatic humor; but now it builds more broadly and fully in a joyous climax, which suddenly drops into a religious chant of the woodwind in the scarce recognizable second melody:



in sustained, solemn organ tones, softened in spirit, echoed by the strings. The answer in second part is in more graceful lyric feeling. Suddenly into vehement clanging of tutti, with the same melody in basses; here again a lull in volume and rhythm, only to end through the original *fanfare*, in furious galloping of the theme, in various rhythmic guises, in loudest, most emphatic close.

VI

BEETHOVEN (Continued)

The Seventh Symphony.

In spite of the remark in the last chapter on the new quality of Beethoven, in advance of Haydn and Mozart, of the element of a *meaning*, it is very necessary to mark the purely sentient, naïve, non-intellectual (I should rather not say emotional) character of Beethoven. And this is best seen in the seventh symphony, especially as against the third, the fifth, the sixth, and the ninth. On the whole, the untitled symphonies are much to be preferred.

We must be careful to reject absolutely any theory of story or description, except where the master himself gives it. And there, as in the sixth, it is not a success,—the highest proof of the superiority of absolute music. The test, after all, is the purely musical impression, but not in an unthinking attitude. Beethoven's greatness (and that of Brahms, too) is shown by his refusal to be categoried, to have his emo-

tion narrowed and whittled down to answer a picture or story. In a very large degree, programme music is, after all, a pretty, intellectual game, a subtle flattery, a mental feat, a guess at conundrums. Generally, there is a real loss in the apparent gain. If the emotional is the true attitude, it can be seen how the title, by absorbing attention, prevents a pure enjoyment and the test by natural perception. Creating a false interest, the label withdraws the normal, unbiassed attention from the music itself, preconceiving the mind to an *a priori*, arbitrary connection or significance. In one way, entitled music is like the clever juggler who tricks by diverting attention from the real to a pretended act; in another, it is like the poor painter who holds the witless mind by the strength, not of his art, but of the printed label.

Schumann's view of programme music was the true one,—the title distinctly and literally an after-thought. If the impelling feeling must be unconscious, the poet cannot know, until he has finished, the word that explains his mood. This is the true view of the ninth symphony,—a spontaneous burst into song, not beautifully

preconceived and prearranged, as of voices that could no longer contain the feeling stirred by the earlier music.

Implication of meaning came largely from ultra-radicals like Berlioz, who wanted, mistakenly, to raise the dignity of music by imputing to it a power which it could not, in the nature of things, possess. Their artistic sense was blurred by the philosophical. They confused the true limits of music and prose. Hence their incomplete work (as in all opera), seeking to eke out their music with a "meaning." Our genuine gain in joyousness from an untitled work of pure music is much greater than the temporary flattery of seeing, or seeming to see, a subtle significance.

For this reason, it seems well for this once to choose a work absolutely free from the taint of attempted translation; deliberately to avoid pictured or storied explanations; simply to get the true musical impression, not without keen study, at once as a rare example and an illustration of the real attitude of the listener. Or, if we hear of explanations, let us take them only to reject, with presumption against all; for, at most, but one of them can be true.

Such an ideal symphony is the seventh. It is impossible to escape the din of the critics who shout their labels at us,—their "Rustic Wedding," "Moorish Knighthood," "Masked Ball," "Pastoral Scenes."* But men will forget that the more a work refuses definition, the greater it is. In proportion as the interpretation is general, it is apt to be true. It is all part of our human impulse to limit, to circumscribe everything and everybody but ourselves, in order to make clear and easy to understand.† We are in too great haste to solve all puzzles by force, to cut the Gordian knot. One more observation on these critics: How each one understands or receives exactly according to his capacity, just like so many vessels of varying size, is nowhere so clearly shown as in symphonic commentaries. And this is a great truth, and the best view of criticism. Thus each has a right, without pretence of judicial

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* If I had to join in the chorus, I should call it "The Earthly Symphony,"—Goethe's

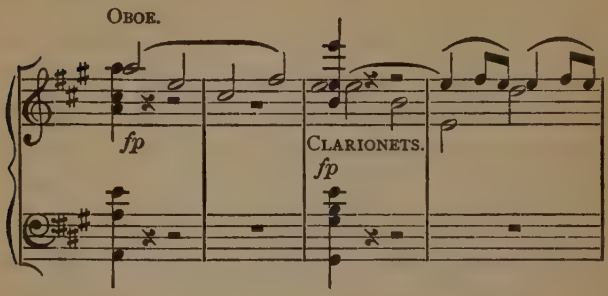
"Wirklich ist es wunderschön
Auf der lieben Erde."

† Also, I fear, from a less worthy motive of depreciation.

authority, to tell the other how he feels about it; and each one is giving something of himself.

One common quality has been read in the seventh symphony by so many commentators, that the latest critic must naturally emphasize an opposite element which seems to him to have been overlooked. All agree in the bewitching rhythmic spell that shines through every bar of the symphony. But where we must differ with many interpreters is in the degree of lightness (or of seriousness) which they find. It seems as if many view merely the fact of the dance-rhythm, and of the simple melodies, without feeling the bigness, the fundamental depth of the orchestral treatment. But, avoiding the danger from preconceived theory, let us listen:

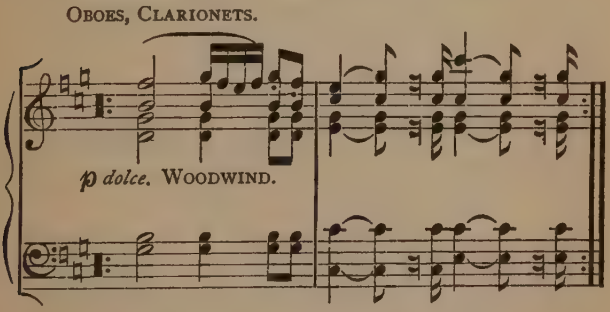
The beginning is serious, the slow *Sostenuto* of Haydn,—of Brahms, too. But Beethoven could not, with the light intent of an Offenbach, sound a solemn prelude, only to dance away into frivolity for the rest of the evening. Therefore this beginning is significant. Then, a symphony must begin simply, alone to show its scope.

Out of heavy bursts of chords floats a quiet, legend-like theme, in primal intervals (somewhat as in the *Eroica*), in succeeding strains of the woodwind:

In both is that German, profound philosophical impulse to find the mystic formula, the pervading cosmic principle, as in the second part of Faust; the feeling, too, of Mozart's favorite motto,* in the Jupiter symphony and elsewhere. The literal musician, the "Fachmann," will say that these themes are chosen for their capacity for development. But this is exactly the wrong idea. He fails to see below the black notes on the surface. He treats music as a branch of mathematics, for-

* See Chapter IV.

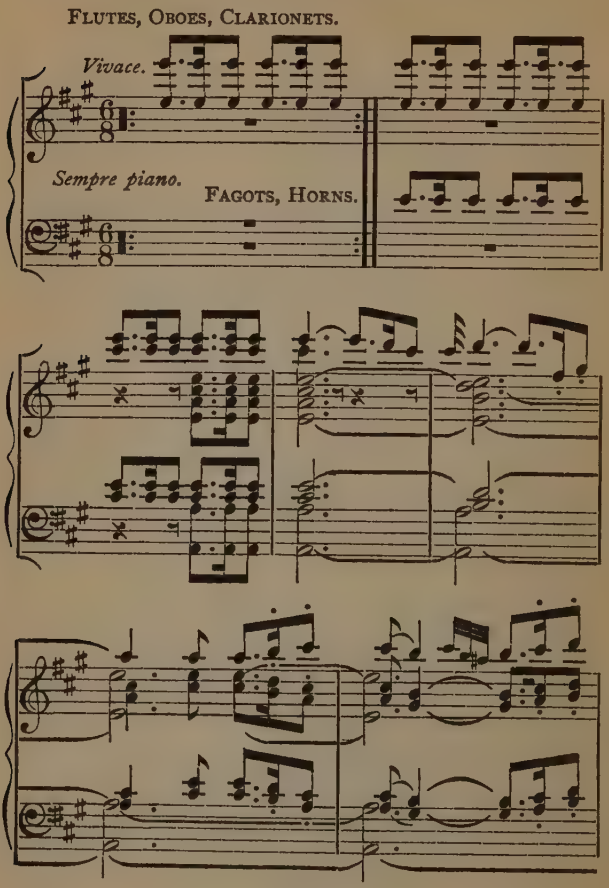
getting entirely our definition of the Unconscious Arithmetician.

After a few bars of solemn chanting of the legend, there is a gentle stir of motion in the strings, which gradually infects the rest. With the quiet theme still pervading, the whole slowly gathers movement,—this is the clearest impression ; still, the motto constantly completing and rounding out. As it grows to overpowering dimensions, there suddenly breaks through a melody, not of dance, but of the most tensely pent desire for rhythm, in harmony of woodwind :

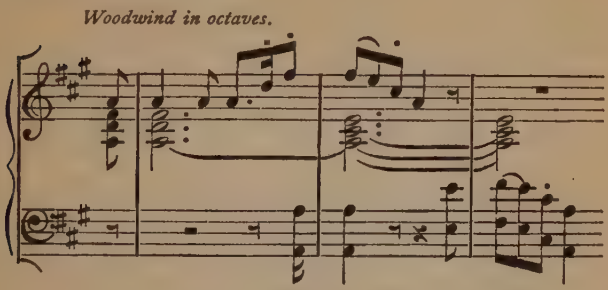


a call for the dance, oft repeated, high in the woodwind and low in the strings (interrupted by the earlier phase). Then there is a gradual joining of hands, getting ready. Some begin ; all are still moving imperfectly. Soon the

whole movement grows strong and united into a *Vivace* dance, led by the woodwind:



The strings at first merely strum lightly in time. But soon they take a higher part, in echoing response:



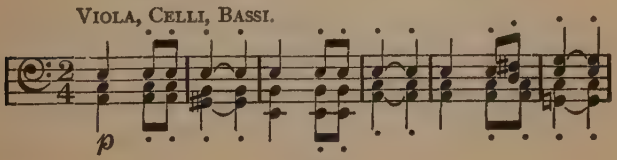
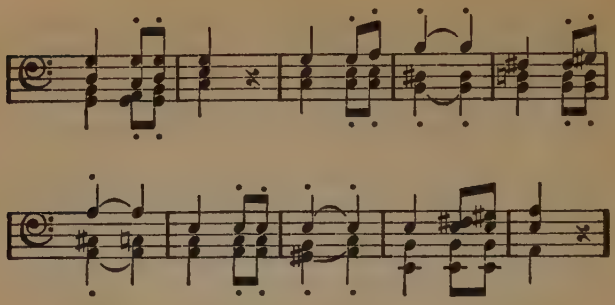
As the bass strings thus dance the time in counter-movement, the whole is too ponderous for frivolity; it becomes deep. This must be seen throughout. If the basses gave a mere rhythmic step, it would be otherwise. Their active vocal part gives a cosmic color to the whole. The dancing melody is so continuous that it seems impossible as well as needless to distinguish first and second themes. It is all so clear. Like a great round dance, they stop, and, gathering with a run, begin again the more furiously, now holding with a long step to return to the rhythm, suddenly in quietest, daintiest skipping, still softer, then in bold, loud chorus,

always this united feeling of a mass in unison, not of a small group,—a dancing song with changing phases; sometimes the song is everything, then it is a mere dance again.

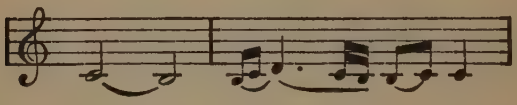
We must remember, here as ever, this dance is merely symbolic. We must not try to find a picture of it, nor to see it everywhere. It is only a figure, a passing image of a much greater idea or feeling. The joint dance of all is the common uniting of mankind in joy, as was proclaimed in those days by poets in verse and tone, and might well be proclaimed now anew. In another view, it shows how Beethoven combined purest exuberance with profoundest sympathy.

And, after the repeated statement, the period of discussion (to avoid the hated "development") shows the symbolic quality most strongly. For here, in the much weakened, almost halting rhythm, is the separate individual wandering off, clearest in the contrapuntal process. The hue of metaphysics is on. Up and down, one against the other, in the gray, colorless straying of independent individuals, the common bond is relaxed and forgotten, only to join once again, with gradual

uniting, in the universal rhythm. If the dance is symbolic, the wandering is separate thought and action, independent, though not without interdependence. But ever again, after the tendency to stray apart in disunion and discord, comes the magnificent joining in the common movement and song.

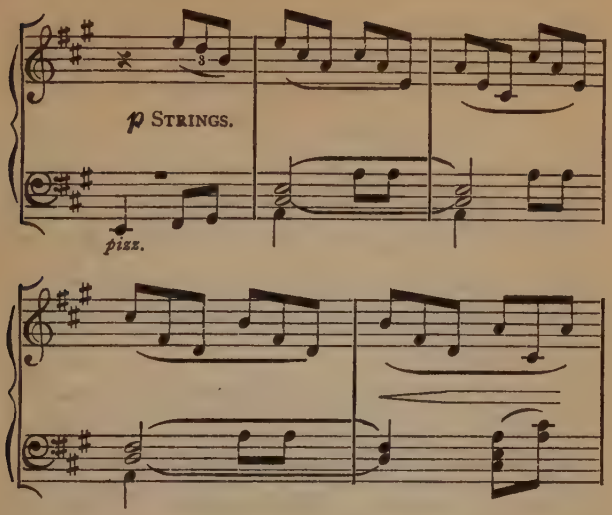
Allegretto is the nearest approach Beethoven can make to the mood of pathos in this poem of Earth and Humanity. In this balance of rhythm with solemnity is, to us, one of the highest of all inspirations. It is in a vein rare to Beethoven, wherein we see much kinship with Schubert. The spirit of this *Allegretto* must have stirred in the younger master when he thought his famous melody of the song, "Death and the Maiden." We cannot escape, again, the mystic German groping for fundamental truth in a single motto; as, first, the essential harmonic and rhythmic plan is simply stated in lower strings, with sombre, broken sounds:



and then the melodic song surges above in



clear, sustained tones, while the former fateful dirge continues its solemn, unaltered march.

The second melody, in major, abandons the solemn vein, in a strain of purest lyric feeling, human and mortal, not of eternal truth. Strangely, it reminds us of quite another vein of Schubert, frequent in his impromptus. But there is no complete escape from the old rhythmic beat which keeps dinning on in the bass against the swinging melody of violins:



The lyric love-song is over, and now we are alone with the mournful hymn, but this is sung with greater freedom and lightness. Suddenly the strings alone strike into a monkish fugue on the original theme in thin, ominous tones, with unceasing course of the monotonous, rhythmless countertheme, all in pious submission to fate. But now fugal and countertheme both are rung with overwhelming power by the whole orchestra. Once more the strain of human longing is heard. Then comes the end in the same dull, broken, fateful sounds,

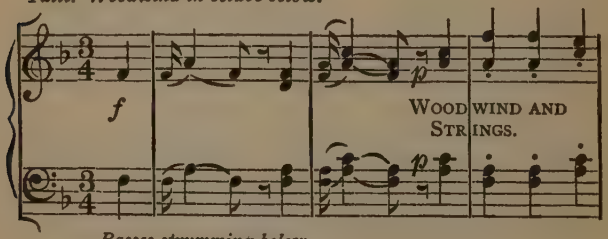
with a strange wail in the violins with the closing chord, as of a dying soul.

Scherzo. Presto.

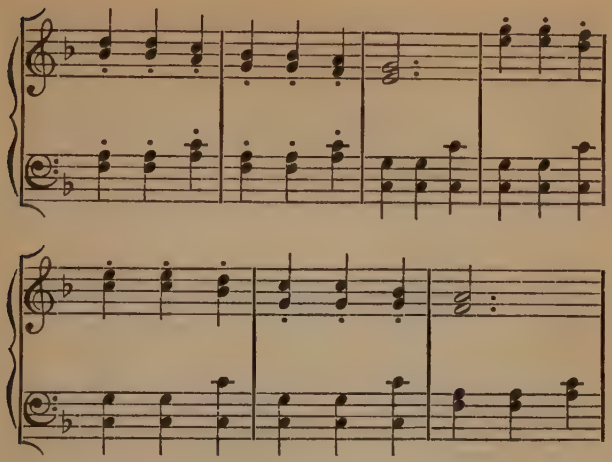
Now for the dance in earnest. It is the natural climax for such a symphony, this third phase; the very acme and essence of rhythm. All the pent-up motion is let loose, yet not in wild disorder, but all in unconscious though perfect obedience to a subtle swing. As elsewhere, the highest sum or quantity of motion is only possible with regularity and harmony simultaneously and successively, as of horses drawing a chariot. They must all race in one united agreement of a common speed, for real achievement of motion. And never was Offenbach or Strauss half so light as this profoundly serious master of ours.

Presto.

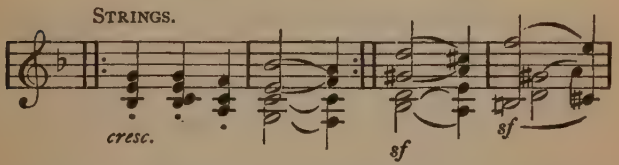
Tutti. Woodwind in octave below.



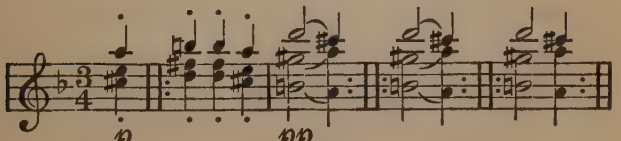
Basses strumming below.

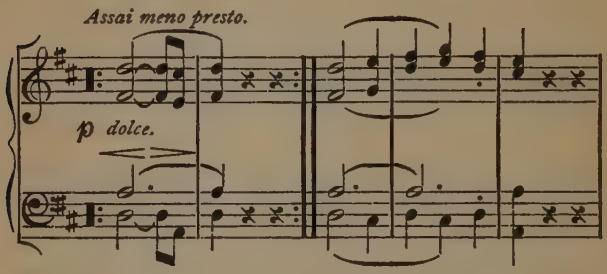


And were long-sustained notes ever so inviting to the dance, so subtly alive with motion:

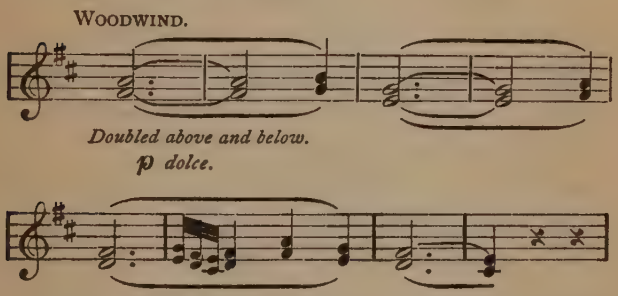


or in the oft-repeated humming in flute and clarionets, like hovering insects:



But much greater is this subtle implication of motion in the *Trio*, where with violins sustaining a long *A* in octaves, the droning horns, fagots, and clarionets are singing, in diminished speed, a new theme:

It is a typical union of highest feeling and art. With violins sustained on a high tone, giving merely a rare quiver, it is like the constant buzzing of forest bees, but so subtle that it is for ruder ears really a rest with highest motion, much as the humming-bird, with wings vibrating in invisible motion, seems to rest on hidden threads, or like the pulse of sound itself, which is so rapid that it becomes one sustained tone. But this is only around and about. Through the midst comes the quiet, intimate song of the woodwind; emerging

from nature sounds, it speaks human sentiment. There is no mistaking this in the quiet, definite notes of the song. It is too articulate in its contrast with the vaguely quivering, buzzing wood-notes. And later the song is ever more human, almost pleading, save for its quiet, constant rhythm:

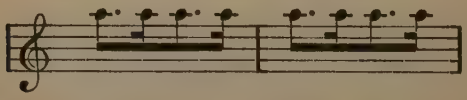


The horns begin a gradual stir of rhythm; more and more enter, until all the world, man and nature, with overwhelming power, have joined in our sweetly solemn song.

It is really, all this Trio, a sort of idyllic rest in the woods, from which we are whirled by a sudden shock back to the impersonal frolic of the original scherzo, with all its romping joy, in full career to the end, not without several returns to the musing revery of the

song of the Trio. And withal there is never a break in the relentless, resistless motion, intensely rhythmic in all its disguise.

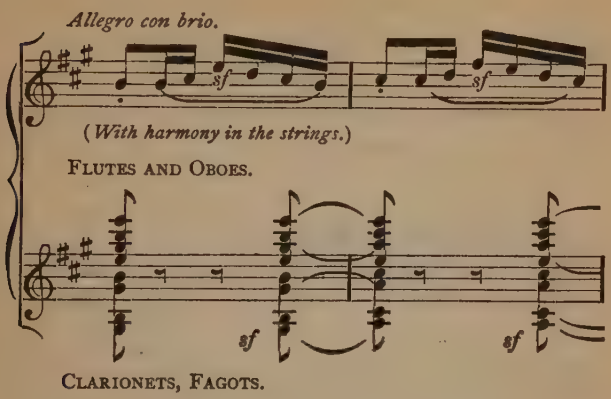
The Finale is a big, almost a serious abandon. With the infectious, resistless dance is a certain ponderousness,—above all, a simplicity which betrays its universality. It is greater than national, though there is the suggestion of national song. The primitive simplicity is shown in the absence of defined melody, of varied tonality, of contrast of rhythm. It is hard to find any official themes in the whole melodious tissue, and the complementary chords, of tonic and dominant, are rung with almost barbarous plainness. Magnetic as is the dance, it is in the simplest conceivable rhythm :



There are no contrasts, save in the sudden light tripping after the ponderous clog of the whole orchestra.

If any theme can be called the subject, it

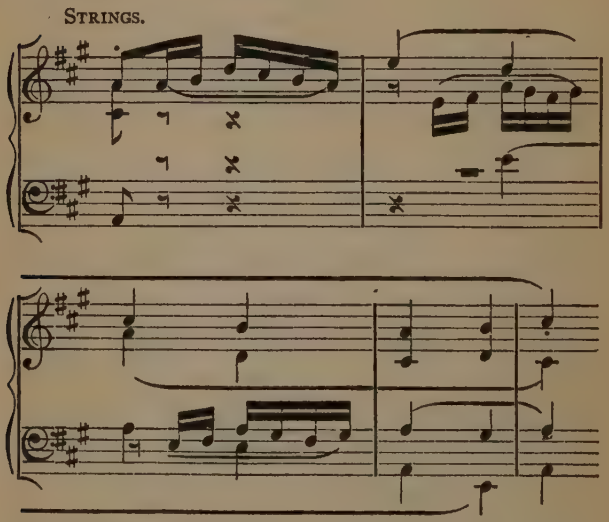
is in the pervading figure (first in the violins), after rhythmic chords:



where all the woodwind comes dancing in on ponderous, eccentric skip at the end of the bar. It is in the very lack of pretence, of conscious beauty of outline, or of significance in the melodies, that consists the feeling of romp. And yet we must always come back to that quality of joy which we saw in the first movement, which seems special to our master, as it is to the highest poetic feeling: of profundity. Nothing could be more reckless, irresponsible in its abandon, than this rollicking Finale; but no one can think of it as

frivolous, can escape its stamp of universality and eternity.

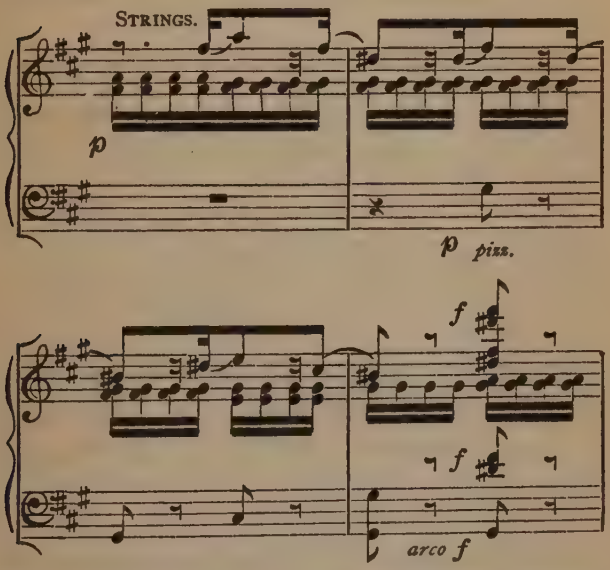
On it goes, after first repeating of melody, followed by mere running up and down of all the wind, with strings beating the time. They change about. Then a bandying of the original phrase in the strings:



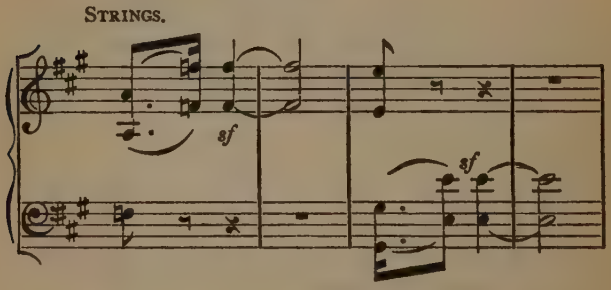
with a mere suspicion of logic, of discussion, followed immediately by the simplest, most childlike dancing up and down in the primitive rhythm (cited above), as if to reject the

very suggestion of conscious thought, all together, hand in hand, in unison step, until the first contrast, to which we alluded above.

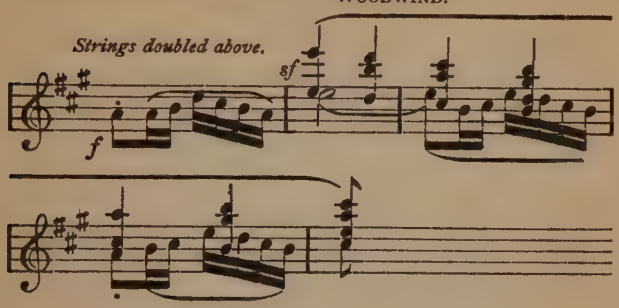
As all stop on a sudden chord, the violins trip lightly along, to the strumming of strings alone, with sudden shock of interrupting chorus, like clownish attempts at frightening:



The finest romping on, all stamping heavily together, with eccentric thud, followed by lightest tripping chase of strings up and down,

the very ideal of frolic. After repetition of all of this, we are curious how far the master will ascend (or descend) to the region of reflective thought in what German technique calls the *Durchführung*. But all we can discover is, after careering and coursing of the leading figure, a little wondering pause in violins, echoed or mimicked by lower strings:

plunging back into the rollicking swing. Later, as the high woodwind echoes the dance, there is a queer effect of mockery of this reflecting figure in the violins, in quick successive answers, after which there is a return to the original festivity, with deepening and extending of the little discussion (above quoted). The ending corresponds in increased boisterousness, with a full sounding of the pervading

phrase, together with an answer developed in the discussion above described, which seems to vent the bursting feeling in an almost articulate phrase of exultation:



The Fifth Symphony.

We have so far conceived a symphony as an expression of a dominant feeling, from a subjective stand-point, or, objectively, as a view of life, in four typical phases or moods, of which the first is of aspiring resolution, the second of pathos, the third of humor, the the fourth of triumph. With such a plan, which was gradually and unconsciously developed from Haydn to Beethoven, we could not expect a great number of symphonies from one master. A man's pervading, fundamental feeling

or view could not change so as to permit him to write two such symphonies in quick succession.* But this purpose may be called the highest. There are really two kinds of symphonies, the titled, and the untitled, where the range of feeling is narrowed, more or less, in some way. And we might even distinguish a third class, where there is a mere suggestion, by inscription or by a cursory remark of the composer, of the prevailing mood, contrasted with those works in which there is an expressly limited field from the beginning. Of course, we must never forget the unconsciousness of masters of these general or special purposes.

A very striking example of the specially titled symphony is Beethoven's Sixth, the Pastoral, "on the memories of life in the country." We have described the Heroic Symphony, written "to celebrate the memory of a great man." In more modern works such titles as Spring, Forest, Winter, Rhine are prominent.

It is doubtful whether the importing of titles

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* Mozart's rapid composition of his three great symphonies must be viewed rather as the completion of earlier sketches.

into the symphony, the introduction of what is called programme music, in itself has added to its dignity or power. Perhaps the best type is Beethoven's Pastoral, which is annotated thus: First Movement, Pleasant Feelings awakened on arriving in the Country; Second, Scene at the Brook; Third, Jovial Meeting of Country People, interrupted by Fourth, Thunder and Storm, in turn interrupted by the final movement, entitled Sentiments of Benevolence and Gratitude to God after the Storm. Of course, it is impossible not to accept the composer's interpretation. But it must be remembered that in his sketches an appended note was found, directing the hearer to find the situations for himself; and, further, that in the final programme Beethoven added to the title the words, "Rather an Expression of Feeling than a Picture." If we should be obliged to dispense with any of Beethoven's symphonies, I venture to say that in the Pastoral least would be lost. It is not overbold to say that Beethoven himself was not consciously aware of the true dignity and power of the symphony. Truth in art is determined, not by reasoned *a priori* deduction, but by an irregular

course of experiment, where much error must be expected.

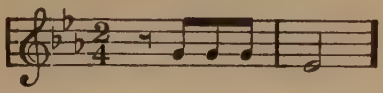
In choosing from the rich field a single work as a type for illustration, from the limits of the untitled class, the Fifth, in C Minor, seems the most broadly representative. The work was produced in 1808, having been for years in course of composition. No title appears in the programme, except

Symphony No. 5, in C Minor, op. 67.

1. *Allegro con Brio.*
2. *Andante con Moto.*
3. *Allegro* (*Scherzo*).
4. *Allegro. Presto.*

There is, perhaps, one prejudice to the unassisted interpretation. It is Beethoven's reported casual suggestion of a meaning of the principal motive; but for the present that may be disregarded. The symphony is characterized by a sublime dignity, vigor, and breadth. At the first hearing it is impossible not to feel that there is a very real purpose behind the notes. The entire absence of frivolous dallying with themes, the striking contrast of succeeding melodies (especially towards the end of the third and fourth movements,

which, against all tradition, follow each other without a stop), above all, the iteration from beginning to end of a certain short passage, but four notes:



with the whole orchestra at times hidden in the basses and drums, now in its grim, terrible severity, again in a dancing measure, then in timid, mysterious discord, until it ends in the clearest note of triumph,—can it be said that all this means nothing, until or unless it be translated word for note into the language of commonplace?

As in all truly great works of the human mind, there must be a certain degree of intelligent perception. Further, a certain maturity is absolutely necessary to understand Beethoven. He is not for the young; above all, not for the shallow. For these he is often no more than ugly and ominous noise, which makes them uneasy. They should shun him. His listeners must be capable of feeling the grimness, the terror, the fight of life. Then they

can exult with him in the triumphant joy of the undaunted.

The recurring problem of musical study is the mode of this perception. There has always been a dilemma between a mere sympathetic, emotional attitude and that of technical analysis. Neither is adequate. The answer must be in analogy to the truth of the mode of creation, which is a blending of feeling and of high art, where the latter is subordinate, yet indispensable as unconscious means of expression. So the listener cannot expect to perceive unless he know this high language of the master. Yet in mere analysis he will not find the message; for art does not communicate propositions by logical proof. The listener must be in sympathetic, expectant attitude, not closed like a fortress to the besieger, not disdaining the utmost knowledge of the art-medium, with mind fully intent on the emotional meaning, by a similar blending, as of the original composer.

We might revert briefly to some special step in Beethoven's advance. It was in the third movement that Beethoven made the greatest change in outline. Originally, with

Haydn and Mozart, it was an idealized dance; Beethoven made it a humorous phase, fitting with the whole plan. But the humor was typically sardonic. He changed its name, too, from minuet to scherzo. But more significant is the change in the treatment of the theme. The era of childlike simplicity had passed. A more intellectual and more virile age had arrived, in which the leading melody in itself is not so important as its use literally and strictly as a theme; an age of musical thinking as against dreaming; of cerebration as against mere inspiration; of a logical sequence of thought rather than a blunt alternative; of a tendency which has resulted in a school where the theme is no more an integral part of a work than is the title of a story.

There is no more convincing evidence of the peculiar power of music, which we have been trying to define, than in the comparison of such works as the seventh and the fifth symphonies; of this graphic portrayal, not of pictures, not of stories, not of doctrines, but of feelings. And while saying the word we are aware of its utter weakness; for feeling may mean the emptiest, the most frivolous, the most useless thing, as,

indeed, it may be the weightiest, the most precious, the most powerful. For when traced thoroughly, feeling such as prompts great artworks is the spring of all else in life worth recording. It is the original fount of all heroic action, of statesmanship, of ethics, of poetry, of humanity; indeed, these are but the cold expression of that which is the living, sentient fire. It would not be difficult for a historian to find in the revolution of France, in the Constitution of America, the crystallized result of the passion which began to rouse men in unconscious beginnings from the first years of Humanism in Italy. And, useful as these organized institutions must be, the most precious forms of expression will be those which show most of the unconscious fire and vehemence of the original impelling feeling. In proportion as they take on practical shapes, they will lose their natural vigor. Thus it is that a medium like music, which, without pretence of articulate definition of the prose language of human makeshift, of so-called practical adjustment to the externals of changing conditions, still rears the highest structure of Art, on figures of enthralling beauty, will be the most perfect

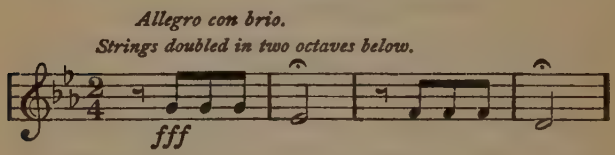
human utterance of our feelings, those all-powerful, noblest stirrings in man's nature. There is no corollary here of depreciation of logic, of significant language. There must be divers modes of utterance, varying in nobility, suited to differing natures and differing conditions of creation and of reception. In the various utterance of emotion, of whatever shade of Art or of differentiated meaning, constituting human intercourse, lies the seed or stimulus for ever new and nobler feelings, which in turn need newer utterance, and lead in their expression to improvement and ennoblement of outward conditions of human life.

Not only in their separate song, but in their contrast, are seen the varying qualities of those two great symphonies, and thereby of the versatile power of the language of music that Mendelssohn meant when he said that music was much more definite than prose, the very quality which laymen—those who live in externals—are fully persuaded is absolutely non-existent.

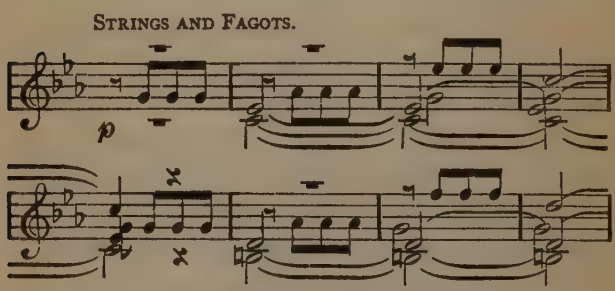
The Seventh is a mighty pæan of joy, in utterance of subjective feeling. The Fifth is burdened with the stern awfulness of the external power, with which the strongest can but

struggle. Most of us run, as from the rain, or hide, as from the lightning, and gratefully bask in intermittent sunshine. The solitary Prometheus can at highest express the sense of struggle, or—— But let the symphony be its own evangel.

At the very beginning, the ominous motto strong, but in stern, hollow octaves:



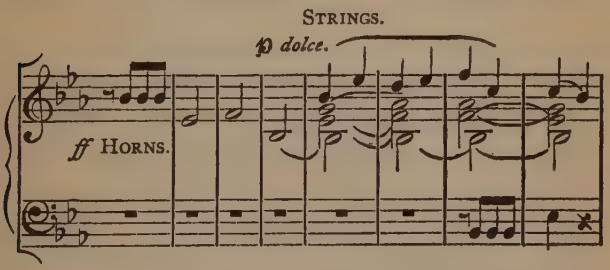
then lightly dancing in the strings, with the rhythm which it first lacked, it rises, a melody



in its responsive singing, ending in massive chords and in a pause that adds to the solemnity of legendary utterance. The first pages

are full of stern, sombre melody, yet without lack of resistless motion. Strange this constant, vital impulse, without joyousness. And striking here, the contrast in sentient meaning of the Fifth and the Seventh Symphonies, the merciless drive of objective, external destiny as against internal, subjective joy.

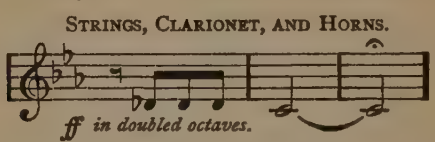
After a more decided, rational sounding of the motto by the horns, follows the quiet, pious second melody in the violins, in soothing major, unmistakable in its sense of beseeching, of refuge from the first,—cherishing peace and solace. But it cannot resist anxiety stealing in



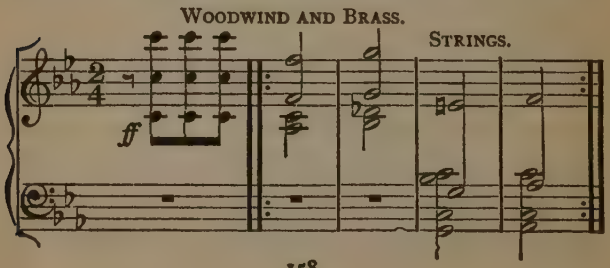
and increasing, as the four notes are approaching in the background of the basses, on to a climax, where the repeated statement ends with a determined ringing of the motto. No greater contrast can be imagined than of the

two melodies. It is like the dialogue of different persons; of stern necessity and pleading spirit, with a quality of pious trust.

Here is the phase of discussion, with austerest warning, and then on with the rhythmical melody and the same theme, first gentle



and light, soon fitful and feverish, into furious hammering. The more rational phase appears, which promises to bring in the plaint of second melody; but it is lost in the wild rush of the fateful sounds, and so, most rare and most significant, there is no sign of the second melody in the whole period of discussion. Instead, there is a responsive succession of solemn chords, tapering off with monotonous repeti-

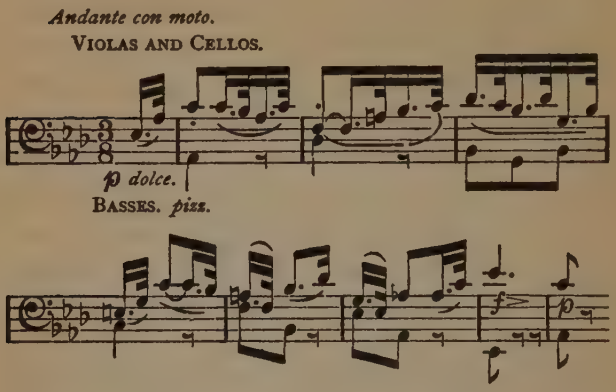


tion, like the stillness of Egyptian temple, into timid expectancy before the renewed shocks of the terrible hammers, ringing their incessant, fateful thud, without peace and solace, in the original motto, followed by the original succession of melodies, where the second sounds more helpless and pitiful than ever. In the coda the main theme still predominates, with a brief fugue, suggestive of priest and church, but above all filled with the gloom of ruthless Doom. There is no mercy as yet.

Andante con moto. It might well have been called *Andante Religioso.* There is an entire change with the first note; in the first impression, rest from turbulence and anxiety; but soon we cannot be quite sure whether it is really rest or still a seeking for rest; like the distinction of Lessing's "Truth and Search for Truth," of which he preferred the latter. There seems to be a distinct feeling of prayer about the Andante. Perhaps the best word would be Faith,—a trustful reliance, which varies in strength as the attacks from without vary in intensity, which are clear in the dim reminders of the haunting motive.

But the predominant feeling is contained in

the leading melody, first announced in the violas and in the celli. It is that kind of mel-

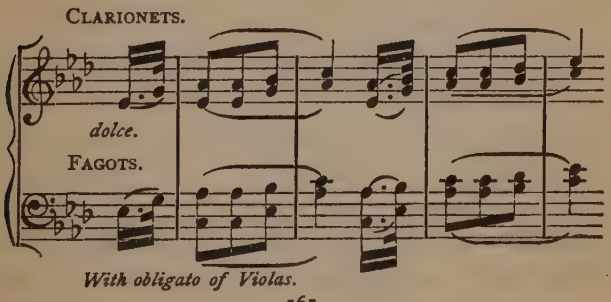


ody where Beethoven strikes his deepest note; the tone of profoundest sympathy, which bound men to him most.

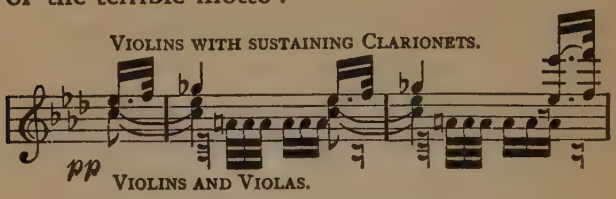
It is not without interest that Beethoven is known to have toiled on this theme, much as a sculptor chisels his vision out of the marble. It shows that there is no necessary connection between the beauty of a melody and the ease with which it was first uttered, which is often called spontaneity. On the contrary, there is reason to think that the musical thoughts of highest value were not without a certain corresponding labor in their final perfection. The

manner of writing is thus often of high interest in gauging, by comparison, the special quality of each master. Thus, for example, this is a melody which Schubert could not write. And we remember how Schubert wrote with absolute freedom from toil, as if delivering himself of a pressing burden. High and rare as was Schubert's fancy, he had not that vein of deep personal human sympathy which marks Beethoven not only as of the greatest among human poets, but of the greatest among the men of all time. There is a tendency to value too highly the quality of ease of utterance. It would be better to err on the other side.

This melody is the main tissue of the whole movement. It is varied only by a secondary one, which is contrasted neither in key nor in theme, serving, in its simplicity, for quick



modulation into triumphant bursts, or preceded often by timid drooping before a suggestion of the terrible motto:



First it rushes into a bold cadence in a new tonal atmosphere; but, quickly relapsing, wanders, still pursued by the motto, an anxious suppliant, into the refuge of the first melody. The predominance of the chief melody is veiled by new figures of rhythm and of setting, and by intervening touches of eloquent pleading or of austere solemnity. At the last verse there is a decided joyfulness in the prayer,—a vision of coming victory, where woodwind and higher strings unite in loudest acclaim on the melody, the horns sound the harmony, the drums the rhythm, and the lower strings strum in rapid accompaniment. The end is in a spirit of reassurance.

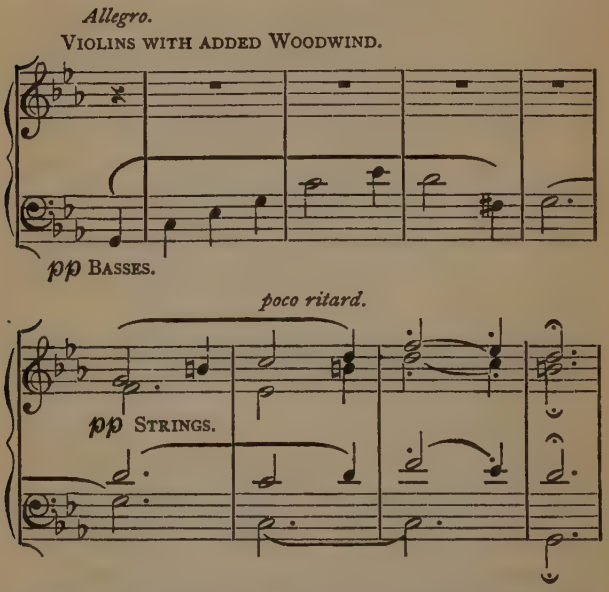
Probably nothing in all musical literature offers such a subtle and irresistible temptation

to find a hidden content, as this third movement, where the name *Scherzo* seems to have been omitted only because it was not needed; although the humor is of a kind that, in its sombre profundity, is as peculiarly Beethoven's as is the pathetic or sympathetic quality of the *Andante*. The temptation comes, I suppose, from the curious atmosphere which one feels immediately on entrance, like that of a magician, when the lights are lowered and terrible things are going to happen.* There is a brilliant though dark-hued dramatic color about it all, as in some ideal *Freischuetz*, without interfering words.

At the risk of seeming rhapsodical to some, pedantic to others, I must recur to some well-worn philosophical terms, for lack of better ones. I can find nothing more expressive than subjective and objective for a certain quality or relation of themes. I cannot escape them; for, more than suggestive or symbolic, they

* It may be interesting for the reader to compare the impression Berlioz gives of this Scherzo somewhere in his writings. The author has purposely refrained from reading it anew, in order to present an unbiassed impression of his own.

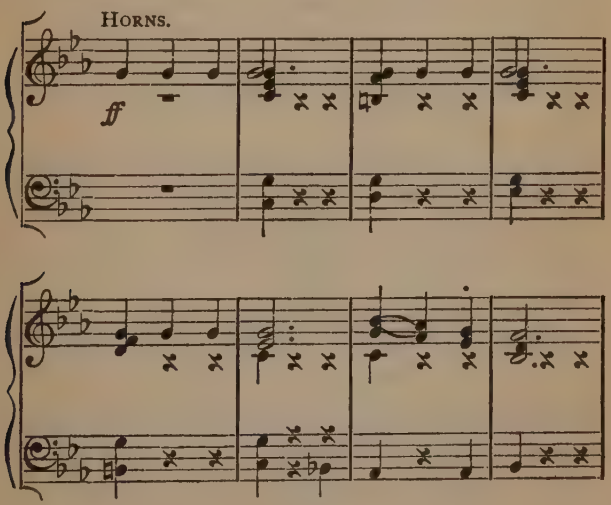
represent accurately the truth of the composer's intent. Thus, nothing can be clearer than this relative significance of question and answer in the first theme, where the former rises from the sombre depths of the basses, like a sinister



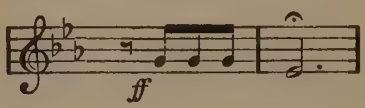
message, while the answer, in higher harmony, is as unmistakably, as against the outer danger, the inner deprecation. Whatever any one may read of story or meaning, according to his sensible or inflammable state, no one who can

feel music at all, can deny this sharp relation of a foreign omen and a personal plaint. It is good to have some bed-rock truth.

Now, after the repeated phrase and pause, what shall we say to this entering figure? How shall we take it? For, as for simply accepting a tripping theme in three-quarter time, and no more,—that is, once for all, out of the question. This is not that kind of music. For those who can or will feel nothing more, we can express mere pity. The horns sound, in curious three-quarter dance time, a kind of iambic



waltz, while strings are thrumming the harmony, a theme of which all but the end is nothing but groups of successive *G's*, with periodical halts, all with utmost vehemence, immediately answered and extended by the whole orchestra, with martial vigor. None can fail to see the hidden relation with the original motto of the symphony; only it has the guise



of a newer rhythm; for it dances along with infectious, resistless swing, instead of the dull thud, with awing pause.

But how shall we take it, even so? Sometimes there is almost a touch of sardonic profanity, almost of blasphemy, of unholy jesting with unspeakable things. Critics have been sure of the ring of defiance here.

But we must remember several things. Some of them we are always forgetting. For one, it is the paradox of musical literature that the composer is less conscious of his intent than is the intelligent hearer. And the reason is not far. The poet's mind is too intensely absorbed

with his creation to have an undercurrent thought for the quality of his mood. That will take care of itself, will express itself in the art, the better for being unwatched. But for the listener it is otherwise; he must by all means get as near as he can to the mood of the master.

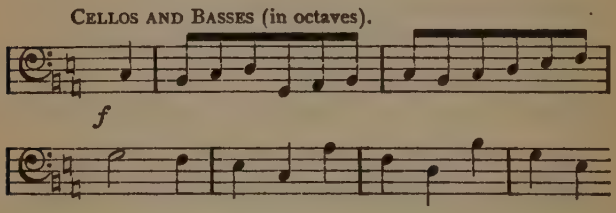
And then we must not expect to see this sentient meaning (as it might be called) constant and interlinear, word for note. There must be often great uncertainty. And yet, within large limits, there may be the most absolute certainty. Thus there may be an indefinable border-land between the subjective and objective attitudes, while at times the two are clearly distinguished.

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether a writer or a speaker is in earnest or in jest. It is not strange if we cannot be absolutely certain of the intent of a composer, especially if he himself could not tell us. If Beethoven had written "*Scherzo*," there might be enough ground for the ring of defiant humor which many critics hear.* But, altogether, to us

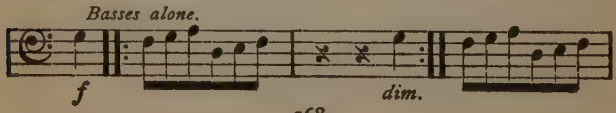
* Literal questions and questioners for each phrase must be shunned with the same horror as the terrible people who ply you for categorical answers of *yes* or *no*.

the hue of seriousness prevails, what with the gloom of the minor, the vehemence of the chords, notwithstanding the constant tripping movement. Still suggesting the former correlatives, it is the old burden of external omen. The light rhythm, which for some means grim defiance, seems rather merely a new phase for the former threatening evil. But in the middle episode, commonly called the *Trio*, there can be no such doubt.

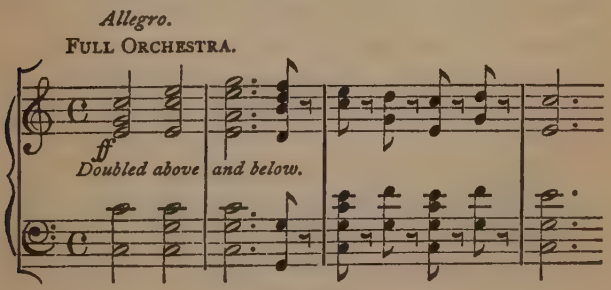
As the lowest strings start alone in a rumbling dance movement, here is the spirit of



purest, roughest humor, boisterous,—not horseplay, much too ponderous. One thinks of the elephant dance in the jungle book. In the second part the humor is still clearer in the successive broken attempts of the basses before



they once more find their feet and rumble away in the dance. But the humor has the profound, eternal quality, fitting with highest art, first ending in a great *bacchanale*. The second time it dwindles away, until we are suddenly back in the sinister, cavernous gloom of the first melody; again, in the puzzling beat of tripping motto, whether human or superhuman, descending into still lower depths of sombrest gloom, with demoniacal perversion of the melody, when suddenly a turn of the major lets in a clear ray of hope, and then comes the heroic lift from the abode of devils to that of angels, from hell to heaven, from sinister, overwhelming evil to moral triumph, to emancipation of the spirit, as the final Allegro, awaiting no pause, throwing off the shackles of the tripping pace, bursts in exult-



ant marching chords in brightest major. It is all clear as the spelled word,—nay, clearer; a striking example, again, of Mendelssohn's *mot* about music and prose. Your polysyllable from the Latin, with devious derivation, has a cold convention of meaning: the music here is the meaning itself, is the living and beautiful embodiment of this very spirit of achieved freedom from outward conditions.*

Curiously, yet naturally, the feeling does not break at first into a pronounced melody, as if the joy were too great to find, for a while, a clear utterance. So there are really two principal melodies, of which, when the first has exhausted its boisterous exuberance, the second sings a clearer and quieter chant, while the noisy basses are ever interrupting with turbulent coursing up and down. So plain is the chant, that you can almost hear the voices, as of some great, comprehensive choral hymn:

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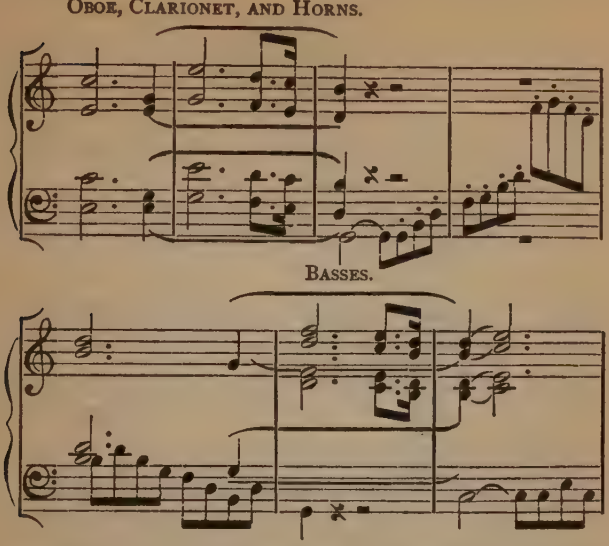
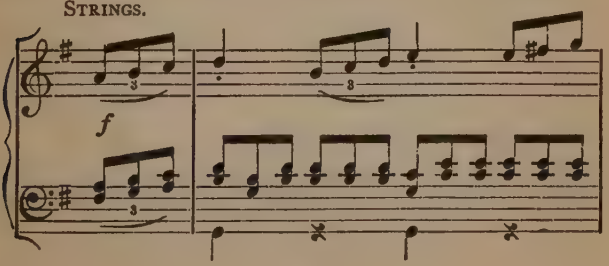
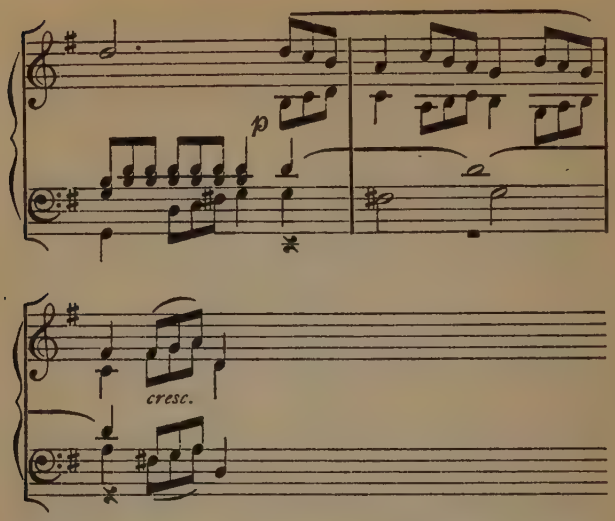
* Again, it is suggested that Berlioz's comment be read of the whole symphony. There is also one by Sir George Grove in a book on Beethoven's Nine Symphonies. There must be other descriptions.

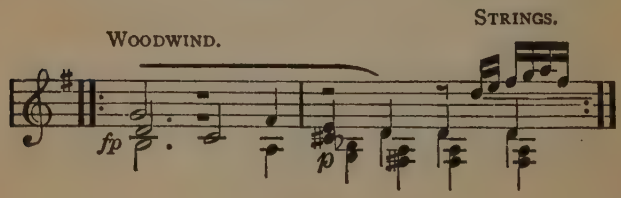


especially in the farther extending of the melody, still in clear notes of song. At last he has found articulate praise. And so he glides into a serener melody in a milder at-



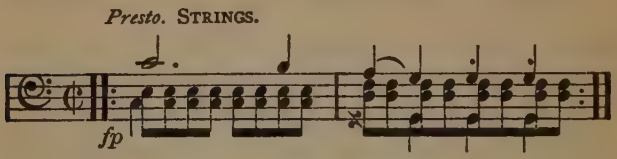


mosphere (the official second melody in dominant key), with less defiant, more feminine ring, more of pure, joyous abandon, joined in refrain of the whole orchestra, growing quite conversational. Then, as if something must still be said, a little postscript melody, in wood-



wind and strings, likewise sanctioned by full acclaim of all. All of which is repeated, as integral text and tissue of the whole, not as mere incidental thoughts. The latter of the secondary melodies is more serious than the former; but there is no uncertainty or drooping. In fact, the note of confident joy is maintained continuously in the discussion (all, of the first of the secondary themes), varying in profundity, in sparkling humor, ending in renewed burst of exultant triumph, where articulate tune is again lost in the vague intensity,—when suddenly, without a warning, the mysterious tripping of the furious movement re-enters with its early stealth, and leads, as before, to the burst of the final Allegro. It is, I suppose, a sort of reminiscence of the early terror, in order to make more sure of the reality of the victory. Again, the triumphant song sounds, first vague, then defined; as the third melody appears in the tonic key, instead of the complementary, we have a queer feeling of nearing home; still more with the fourth in the same familiar region. But we must return once more to the happy strain of the episode. Then a bright, hilarious peal of the second

theme, with new rhythmic charm. From here on the movement is ever faster and faster; not feverish; mere festal assurance of highest joy; until the last theme is rehearsed with doubled speed. Still faster, into a final re-



affirmance of the original theme of assured victory, extended into a complete close; but we cannot stop. We rush on, until, after endless vague reiterations, the end at last may merely come, because it must.

I have said that Beethoven is reported to have given casually an interpretation of his motto, "*So klopft das Schicksal an die Pforte*" ("Thus Fate knocks at the door"). I almost wish he had said nothing; that there might be a perfect test and example of the power of music to define sentient truth, truth of feeling. Starting with Beethoven's words, it is quite possible to build up a complete picture of the strife of spirit with fate. But as soon as the mind occupies itself with the de-

tails of an imaginative picture, the musical attention flags. It cannot be literally translated. The purpose of the master is not a picture for entertainment; it is the communication of a sentiment such as that under which great deeds are done and genuine greatness is achieved, which does not depend for its force upon its minute definability. The more closely we follow the music, the less we can stray from this true meaning, this content of sentiment.

Remarkable as is the contrast of the Fifth with the Seventh Symphony, its difference from the Third is even more striking. Rebellion against existing conventional tyranny and oppression is not rare in Beethoven, whether in words or in notes. But there is something far more, far deeper, in the Fifth Symphony. Whatever Beethoven may or may not have said, there is no resisting the convincing impression of a sense of dull, superhuman, overpowering external evil,—of hopeless supplication, of prayerful faith, of assured triumph. Whether we have labels or not, we feel that the burden is that greatest of man's problems, as in the tragedies of the Greeks, or in the re-

ligion of Jew and Christian. And the solution is no less convincing, nay, far more so, than if set forth in Kantian logic. It is as clear as words could make it a triumph, moral, not physical, and so much the more real. Fate has no power over man himself, the inner man. It cannot control character. The book of Job is not more specific in its content. But beyond all is the overwhelming power of music, which makes us feel it, not as a mere cold symbol, a statement, but as truth itself.

VII

SCHUBERT

SCHUBERT is at once the most understandable and the most mysterious of tone-poets. It is not eccentric to begin thus with a paradox, for he himself was a living paradox, and the puzzle has never been solved. His music always speaks direct to the feelings. There is not the psychological abstruseness of Bach and Beethoven, although there is much suggestion of the mystic charm of deep searching for truth. Schubert is, without any doubt, far the most "popular" of the great masters, and in this position, it seems, he will probably never be displaced. We do not knit our brows in listening to him; we do not wonder at his meaning. We sit content in quiet ecstasy, like children listening to entrancing fairy stories.

But when we consider the poet himself, the machinery of the creation, so to speak, there seems to be no clue whatever. With all other composers it is possible analytically to discover

so-called causes, inheritances, traditions, influences, from far and near, personal and national, broad and narrow. With Schubert we stand absolutely baffled. Since the earliest years of his career he has been the great mystery. To his daily companions, with all the free abandon of his good-fellowship, he was still "der Einzige," the only one, the unexplained. The mystery was increased by the lack of correspondence between his person and his genius. Schubert's presence is reported as insignificant. He had none of the heroic qualities of Beethoven, the delight in making an awful impression. But in any man the quality of pouring forth exquisite melody at such an extraordinary rate would be marvellous. It seems just like some *Tarnhelm*, or magic gift in legend. Schubert had, it would seem, the most remarkable natural endowment for musical creation of all. The only one to suggest close comparison here is Mozart. Alike they had this untiring, almost voracious impulse to write, Schubert in greater measure, however. He would write four and five songs in a day. He would finish one and straightway begin another, often never seeing them again, once failing to recognize one a few

weeks old. The thinnest poetry was enough to start this golden flow of melody. Schubert seems almost a passive instrument, obedient to the voice of some restless external genius. He seemed to do hardly more than hold the pen. He utterly lacked the element of toil of a Beethoven, a Schumann, or a Brahms. And this very difference, as we have suggested, and shall repeat later, is not at all an unmixed advantage. Absolutely there seemed no limit to the flow of his thought. As Schumann said, he could have set a placard to music. And, indeed, it is curious that while in his six hundred and thirty-four songs he duly recognized the greatest poets, yet he set one after another of utterly worthless *libretti* for opera, actually burying reams of great music in the rubbish of bad verse.

The difference from Mozart is for good and ill. Schubert rarely reached the Olympian mastery of Mozart, the fruit of early apprenticeship. So he lacked the control, the sense of completeness. But Mozart had not that magic virtue of Schubert, of lighting on some touch of undreamt beauty which crowns the mystery.

After all, it is not the mere velocity of creation that strikes us most. Much lesser men have been equally industrious.* It is the utterly new beauty that Schubert surprises us with in songs, piano, and chamber works, and in symphonies.† While Beethoven slowly chiselled out his utterance, Schubert found his without searching. And it is this that seems to make Schubert's art less part of himself, less subjective, more a wonderful gift, separate from his own thought.

But it is curious and significant how Beethoven has that other quality which Schubert lacks. Schubert has been called feminine in contrast with Beethoven. This does not seem happy. There is no loss of vigor, no absence of virility and fire. But the broad human sympathy that Beethoven breathes in

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* Schubert might have written as much on a lower plane, and have been deservedly forgotten. Part of his work is on such a plane.

† Of course, once a high point attained, a poet is seldom content with a lower level. But the wonder with Schubert is how he could rest so long on a mediocre level. Apparently he trusted quite passively to the arrival of the true thought.

his *Andantes* comes only from the hero who has struggled and conquered, and looks on in sympathy. Schubert lacks this almost entirely; but we may be firmly persuaded that if he had lived longer he would certainly have achieved it. The reason we shall see later in his symphonies. But in the youthful career, which was, alas! the whole, he was the unconscious seer rather than the moral prophet and teacher. In so far as Beethoven marks an advance from Mozart to a stage where music expresses a higher degree of profound meaning, Schubert relapses into a state of purely spontaneous inspiration.

And yet, in our hopeless paradox, Schubert has elsewhere a striking resemblance to Beethoven. We have suggested in the Seventh Symphony the subtle kinship between the Allegretto and Schubert's melody in the song, "Death and the Maiden," on which he discourses at length in one of his famous quartets. To this same kind of magic melody belongs the Andante of Schubert's great C Major Symphony. It is of the vein, too, in which, as we have seen, Beethoven often begins his symphonies, especially the third and the seventh, the

quality so difficult to express in English: the sense of mystic depth and meaning, that filled German poetry and philosophy early in the century, which must be true of all times and of all nations, utterly opposed to modern English traditions of a philosophy built on geology. It is quite apparent in the beginning of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony; indeed, in a sense, it permeates the whole. It expresses not so much a German national feeling as a certain national mission, or message of the Germans to the world through their philosophy, poetry, and music. And here is seen again the resistless power of Music in such things, in intensifying the deep poetry of Goethe, of Herder, of Schiller; in beautifying, in idealizing their sentiment, in glorifying their profound vision. Thus, through Schubert (and Beethoven) we actually understand better and feel much more strongly the thought of Fichte and Schelling, of German Romantic philosophy. He gives of that period of awakening the very essence of what Novalis is searching for.

But the note in Schubert is not quite the same as in Beethoven; it is more delicate, less sombre, softer, but true and sound, never

morbid or weak. As we have said, if Beethoven is prophet, Schubert is seer. He has less of ethical leaven. But his genius is intensely poetic; it is the essence of lyric inspiration. Hence his greatness in song, not merely German; his perfect settings of the highest lyric flights of a Goethe and a Shakespeare. But his quality was less adapted to symphony, wherefore his true symphonies are all the more wonderful.

Like Weber in fresh romanticism, he is utterly unlike him in needing no outward objects or stories for his fancy. Yet he had an entirely different subjectivity from Beethoven's, purely lyric as against the heroic and epic. Schubert in his moments mounted higher than any. He was the Shelley and Keats combined of music; but they were usually mere moments, not continuous thought, on a high plane, save in these two wonderful symphonies.

We cannot put Schubert down as mere lyricist. He is not lacking in the philosophic insight of Goethe and of Beethoven. But with all his poetic impulse he had not so powerful a grasp of poetic analysis as Beetho-

ven, though he had a keener lyric intuition. This is seen in his endless, sometimes fruitless, strivings,—the vacuous stretches in the C Major Symphony and in many piano works. It seems as if he writes waiting for an inspiration to come while writing; while Beethoven writes directly to the point of melody or climax.

Some light on Schubert's indefinable personal quality comes from the feeling and poetry of historic and national surroundings. It is an age which, in music, philosophy, and poetry is commonly given the name "Romantic." This seems very like a blind guide; for if there is anything indeterminate, it is the "Romantic" in art. Various definitions are given which do not even suggest the same idea. One from an intense Romanticist of that day—Novalis, the poet-philosopher—a very mild description, is the art of surprising in a pleasing manner. If we think of men who shared the spirit (and of others who lacked it), we shall stumble upon a foothold. A pioneer in this field, who was then thought far more important than Schubert, was Weber. From him we have a clearer idea of the reaction. But,

first of all, we must not confine Romanticism to any one period. There is nothing fixed in time or space about this pair of correlatives,—Classic and Romantic. We must remember that Mozart was once Romantic, and Mendelssohn is generally thought Classic. Yet the term has so striking a significance at the beginning of this century, the contrast between Schubert and Weber and their predecessors was so great that the former will probably be for all time typical Romanticists.

There is a curiously ponderous sort of analysis by Philipp Spitta of the Romantic in Opera, in four ingredient elements,—the imaginative, the national, the comic, and the realistic. This is, of course, too definite for general use. It will fit but one period, which, to be sure, we are now considering. The truth is, each master is dual in this respect: he is romantic towards the past and classic for the future. He works for change in traditions and for permanency for all time; otherwise he is merely reactionary. The same thought, the same feeling cannot be uttered twice in succession with the same freshness and spontaneous beauty. So, without derogation to the past, a new poet must

create anew.* As against the permanent classic poetry of the earlier masters there was room and need for Schubert's fancy. And while all are classics for posterity, yet the striking change in Schubert from the masters, who were almost of his generation, makes him peculiarly and perennially Romantic.

We might very well in the last two chapters have called Beethoven Romantic, in reaction from Mozart, perhaps with as great accuracy as any other master. Indeed, Beethoven is often termed so. We saw him the exponent of that remarkable shock given to men's minds by the French Revolution, which affected staid statesmen as well as sensitive poets in verse and in tone. There was a violent awakening from the peaceful, childlike, playful writing of sonatas for the *salon*. Men were forced to be serious. This suggests one of the salient qualities of the Romantic which Novalis ignores and Spitta at most may imply in his element of realism. It is that in the Romantic, external beauty of form and outline is over-

* If Schubert had in any measure dethroned Beethoven (not to impute to him iconoclastic motives), he would have become the supreme classic.

shadowed by the urgent intensity of mere emotional content. This might be called a rebellion of realism against formalism, but with great caution. The realism is of feeling, of inner meaning, and this formalism implies no slur on real beauty of form, which is an indispensable symptom and test of true feeling.

After all, is not every master's youth strikingly his Romantic age, when he reacts against the formal dominance of his predecessor? Later he himself matures; his form corresponds to his new meaning; in turn he becomes, in his very pre-eminence, blighting to younger poets. In Schubert's earlier works, especially for piano, we see a flight from the tyranny of sonata-formality,* we see neglect of structural regularity and beauty of proportion for the sake of some stray nugget of golden melody, or of lesser figure or turn. It was again an emphasis on inner content as against outer symmetry. Later, Schubert undoubtedly approached a finer unconscious proportion between feeling and utterance. But he neither lived nor wrought

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* Of course, this was unconscious again, for he wrote many "Sonatas."

long enough to become in his turn a top-heavy master of musical ceremony. And we must not forget—we shall be reminded of it later—his final absorption and mastery of the symphony; most significant, whether in the view of Schubert the master, or of the Symphony, as perennial channel of pure tonal poetry.

In the typical Romantic reaction there is necessarily less of the repose which conduces to homogeneous, finished treatment, with a certain conscious stress on its own beauty. In the Romantic there is the new emotion or idea which burdens the mind, drives it to a more definite utterance at all hazards, at the expense of conventional precept. With the true master this leads to wrenching and bursting the fetters of tradition without real violation of fundamental artistic principle, without actual formal weakness. Form in the abstract must never be confused with concrete conventional forms. But with less than complete mastery, its special strength which Romantic inspiration imports of melodic fulness or power of intimate definite utterance, almost inevitably involves some weakness in outline, in development, in discussion. We have here, unintent-

tionally, come upon a striking shortcoming of Schubert. But this weakness which shines through six or seven insignificant symphonies, which nearly neutralizes the glorious melody of many piano works, was finally conquered in the achievement of two symphonies, that may fitly and fairly rank with Beethoven's nine.

But we were thinking, in the Romantic reaction of highest mastery, of Beethoven. With him it was a cosmic movement. With Schubert and Weber the feeling was rather a national one, and it is so expressed in the new quality of their melody. Beethoven's melodic scope was larger; his most potent means lay in profound power of treatment and discussion.

The national vein of Schubert and Weber expressed a state of things which is now historic. It came from the same impulse which stirred the first beginnings of German literature in a Lessing, a Wieland, a Herder, and a Goethe, culminating in the united burst of nationalism on the downfall of Napoleon. Indeed, its final political expression is but an event of yesterday. Music suffered under a different tyranny from the French influence on German literature. There it was the Italian

domination (not unlike the German glamour to-day in America), and, through the Italian, of the revived legends and heroes of Greek and Roman mythology. Mozart, in *Don Giovanni*, at last left the tiresome procession of shadowy Greeks, who had filled all early opera; as did Beethoven in *Fidelio*. But neither had the courage to write a pure German name. The strong sense for reality of sentiment and for dramatic truth in these operas does not constitute a distinct reaction; the tendency is too gradual. The Romantic rebellion came in Weber. He boldly threw over the Welsh suzerainty. Everything is freshly Teutonic,—language, titles, legends, characters.

But language, titles, legends, heroes do not concern us in pure music. The question is of melody. No one can deny the Italian quality lingering in Mozart; the achievement in Beethoven of a more catholic or cosmic strain; finally, in Schubert and Weber, the full blossoming of German lyric song in music, as with Goethe in verse. All this applies most directly to Schubert's *Lieder*. His realm, where he was long supreme, is the German folk-song, as against the Italian Aria of earlier opera. It seems that

Schubert, with all his personal genius, came at the mathematical point of time to voice in song the unuttered German national feeling.

But the German quality of Schubert goes far deeper. And here we cannot escape the question how far the symphony is dependent upon the folk-song. I can see no other answer than an immediate relation,—one that tends to mark the limits of original creation in art. In this sense, Goethe did not create his lyrics, nor did Burns. Neither invented the form, the metre of their song. They simply wrote in the manner of their own national folk-song. Thus each new lyric is but a variation on some old fundamental type.

In music this national quality is equally essential and pervasive. The symphony, as a group of great utterances in high art, can be sifted to a discussion of a few melodies or themes. All else is in a sense subsidiary. The theme is the substance, the text. Thus the bearing of folk-song on the greatest masterpieces is clearly all-important. (The meaning of such a relation for Americans is significant; we may return to it later.) We have treated above, as we describe below in detail,

how Schubert expressed in his symphonies a feeling which had a strong relation to a spirit in German poetry and philosophy.

Far the most important trait of Schubert's career is what seems his moral evolution through mastery of the symphony. And here appears a wonderful, an entrancing, and a profoundly important mystery in the relation of art and ethics. Schubert was gifted with the talent which made sustained utterance in rounded, perfect, unconscious outline a difficulty; so he was morally endowed to make most difficult a certain balance, a thoroughgoing completeness. If he had yielded to his weakness, if he had become what moderns call a degenerate, he would have followed the line of least resistance, have written still more songs, have perhaps devised some new shift of form, eminently suited to his capacities and defects. But this is exactly what Schubert did not do. He struggled through seven ineffective symphonies, where there is no rounding out into unconscious completeness, where the melodic inspirations are not justified. But he did not yield in the double fight,—of artistic and moral self-realization. And, finally, none too soon,

he achieved the double victory. In March, the C Major symphony was begun; in November Schubert died. This, his tenth symphony, is in every way typical, symbolic, directly eloquent of this greatest of heroic struggles, which ought to come to every man, whereby the artistic victory becomes an expression of the moral, and whereby the corresponding art-work has perhaps, as its greatest value, this stamp of ethical achievement. I should even say that, where this is not attained in artist or poet, the art or poetry cannot be of permanent value. Lacking this moral stamp, it cannot have lasting beauty; or rather in converse statement the principle is more clearly borne out. And this is the most striking value of Schubert's career. All this, too, must bring with it a correction of the prevailing monstrous theory that genius involves abnormality.

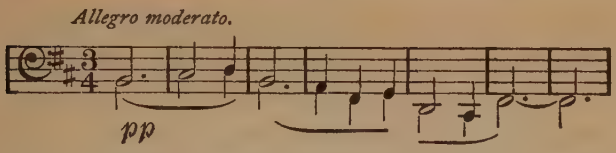
Symphony, B Minor. (*Unfinished.*)

(Allegro Moderato. Andante con moto.)

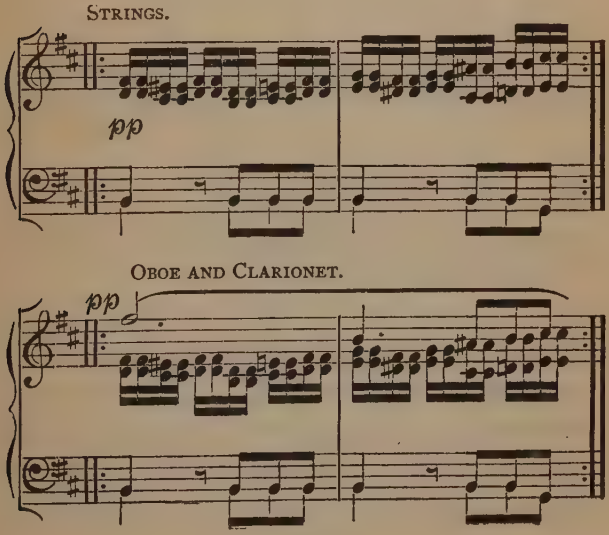
The Unfinished Symphony is equally remarkable, whether viewed in the whole literature of music, or merely in the group of Schubert's works. In the first place, it is not, as

might be thought, his last work; it is in no way to be likened to the unfinished romances of great novelists. Yet, while written six years before the end of his short career, it seems, with perhaps one exception, absolutely his highest level, which he did not distantly approach for a long time. Then it is somehow strangely free from characteristic defects which troubled Schubert before and afterwards. Nay, it seems marked by the very qualities essential to the symphony which he most lacked elsewhere; so that, of all his nine symphonies, the unfinished, and the last, in *C Major*, are the only ones generally performed.

The work begins in a way like nothing save some touches of Beethoven (in the third and in the seventh symphonies), where the bass mysteriously foreshadows the melody. It is, after all, the bass to which you must look for the symphonic quality. Schubert's lyric leaning is betrayed by a too frequent tendency to run into accompanied melody. But here Schubert, with all the contrast, shows his strong affinity for Beethoven. We cannot put him off as a mere lyricist. The legend-like melody in the bass strings:

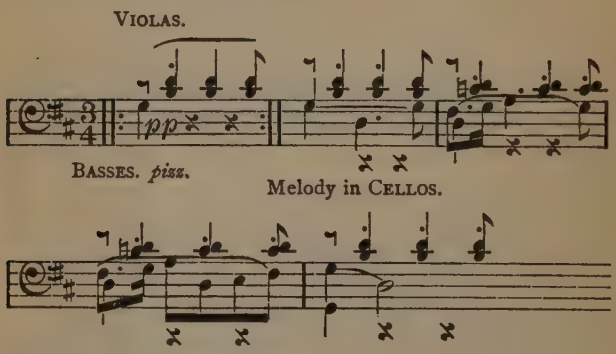


is preparatory. But the melody is too subtle for formal statement. First comes a quivering in the strings (with rhythmic bass), where somewhere an indefinable melody is hovering. But presently, like a royal figure after his noble precursors, the real theme sounds high and clear, though in softest tone, in the woodwind:



while the herald-figures lapse into attendants. Melodic separation seems, somehow, wrong. To drop theoretic phraseology for once, the whole is like a continuous flow of melody where each phrase seems chief until it pales before its successor.

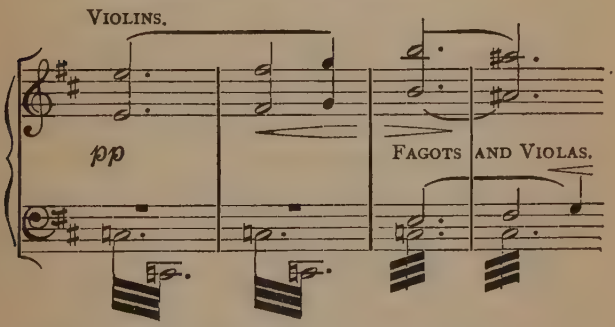
So, after some overpowering clashes, which preserve the prevailing tone of delicacy and lightness from monotonous sweetness, there glides in, borne by the cellos, the most charming melody in all music:



delicately echoed high in the violins. With all its perfect melody, and the softest and purest orchestration, the movement is full of romantic shocks and bursts, as if the essence of legendary poetry. The necessary vigor is not lacking,

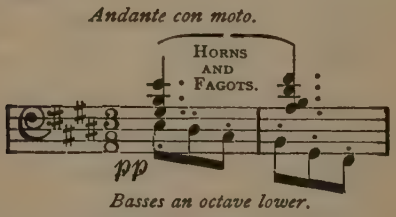
nor the true relation and balance of *dolce* and *forte*. It is a mistake to view the crashing chords as mere interlude between the verses; they are quite as real a part of the poem as any other. But with all the beauty of the melodies and of the modulation (which was Schubert's special secret), what is called the development, after the repeated statement of melodies, is somehow perhaps of the highest spontaneity, although just here we might expect the greatest weakness.

A motive from the first phrase:

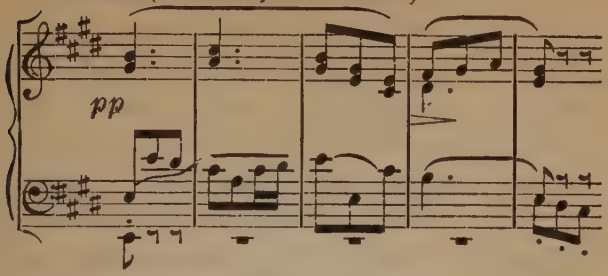


treated in canon, rises to a dramatic climax in which, added to the dynamic effect, is an overpowering surprise of modulation. Again and again the tempest seems about to subside into the enchantment of the second melody, but

each time it rises to a new height. Now the whole orchestra sound the answering phrase in unison; then with the motive in the basses, the strings accompanying in *tremolo* figure, a wild perversion of their original melody, the whole orchestra thunders and storms in mad tossing about of the motive, where the secret of counterpoint is unconsciously invoked for the most dramatic of passages. Suddenly we are in the delicate, mysterious atmosphere of the first melody, and so on through the second, with a final repetition of the original bass figure to the end. The whole is the final essence of romance, the feeling of Arabian tales, with quick, sharp succession of happenings, good and ill, with no room for prosaic reflection.

The *Andante* begins more quietly, but it is in the same vein. At the outset there is the same melodic bass:

presaging the melody in the strings:

STRINGS (with melody doubled above).



Indeed, the very quality of the tonal change of scene is characteristic of Schubert's modulation. Throughout, the duet between the active *staccato* bass figure and the quiet gliding of the violins is sustained. Perhaps it is its dainty surprises of modulation that somewhat take the place of the dynamics in the *Allegro.* Yet here in the second page is a sudden martial sound in the trebles, with a noisy lumbering in the bass like the tread of giants, suddenly thinning away into the original *pianissimo* melody. The whole episode of the first theme departs with the same phrase which introduced it. Equally complete is that of the second. Preceded by a curiously promising rhythm in the strings, the clarionets sing a melody so simple that you wonder where the charm lies.

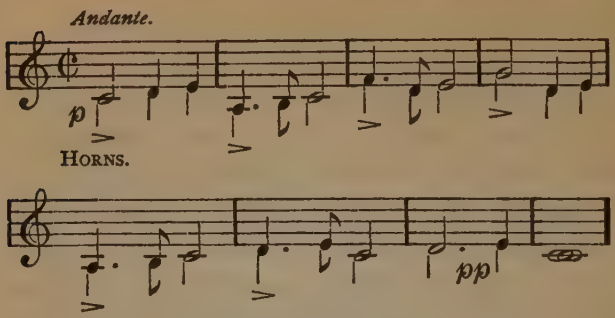
Quoting will not show it; the secret must be in large part in the accompanying rhythm and in the exquisite turn of modulation. Indeed, it is not a strict melody at all, but melodic speech which might go on as long as the urging rhythm will hold out. In its later career it develops even more beauty, so that the beginning seems mere introduction. Suddenly the vision—at its loveliest—is rudely broken by loud crashes, where we lose all sense of connection with the past until we recognize a noisy minor of the basses, which is a gloomy memory of the second melody; the storm rages furiously, but in a trice ends with the enchanting rhythm which again promises the second melody in its true guise, this time exquisitely given in canon duet by cellos and violins. Again there is here one of the highest passages in all music; because to all his genius of melody, harmony, modulation, and rhythm, Schubert adds the unconscious mastery of counterpoint. Quietly the scene glides to the first melody, and then, as at first, through the various phases, gentle and wild, not without many new touches with which Schubert never fails to surprise.

C Major Symphony.

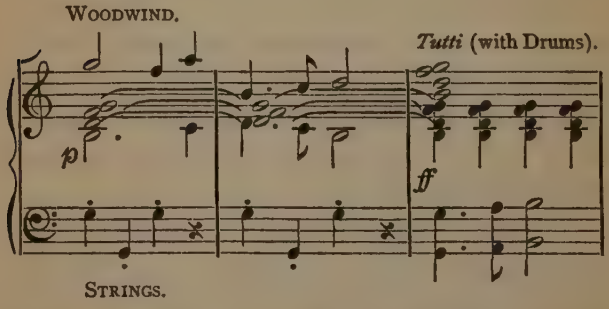
The pervading trait of this greatest of Schubert's works is the large scale of its design, and with this a certain breadth and depth. Indeed, not only does it seem the shallowest judgment to call some modern work the tenth symphony, so clear is the superiority of Schubert's last to all its successors, I am even tempted to hold that in a still higher (and more perilous) ranking of masterpieces, Schubert's C Major belongs in a small group which would not contain all of Beethoven's symphonies. The C Major is certainly far superior to Beethoven's Pastoral, not to go further.

So complete is this unity in Schubert's symphony, a unity transparent in its very breadth and depth and continuous purpose, that the first movement, with all its dimensions and supreme perfection of form, seems like a great *fanfare*, prelude to the rest.

The movement itself begins with a prologue, *Andante*, in a curious prophetic way (like the Impromptu for piano in C Minor), without charm of rhythm or wealth of harmony, alone in solemn horns:



As the strain is taken up by others, and the strings sing an answer in many-voiced hymn, it is like an invocation. Soon there is a loud confident chorus in the original strain. Then a dainty answering melody from the oboe, with strange irruptions on the gentle song by the

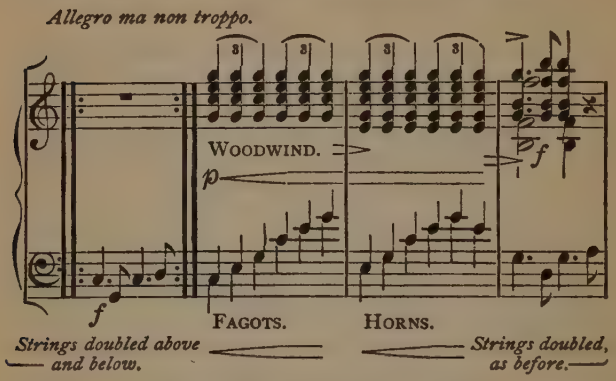


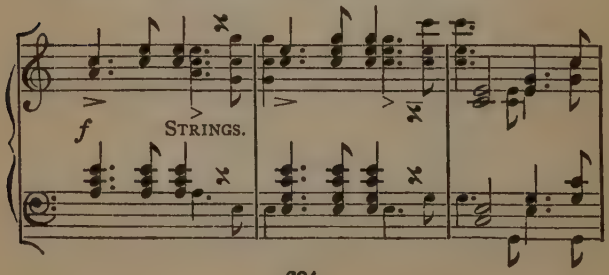
whole orchestra, ever and again in eccentric alternation,—a kind of refusal to be committed

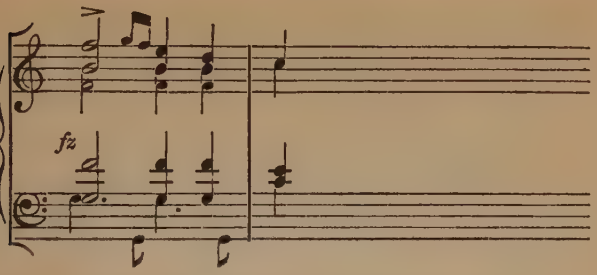
to either humor. The echoes, continuing through gray changes of tonal color, finally break into a clear melodious close in the original key; slowly the prophetic atmosphere changes to one of joyful confidence. The first phrase is sung by the woodwind, with new movement in accompanying strings. The whole has some of that promise of coming rhythm which we saw in the prelude of the Seventh Symphony, and a similar gradual gathering of all to join in the great dance of the Allegro. There seemed to be in Beethoven and Schubert in the beginning of their symphonies a common feeling of solemn dedication to high purpose, which broke gently and with increasing momentum into exuberant song.

Suddenly there is a burst into that indefinite joyousness, just like the *Finale* of Beethoven's Fifth in its vague and boisterous turbulence. The literal mind must have its concrete traditions. It is uneasy without the official themes. Otherwise, there is too much barbaric high spirits. Indeed, this work is to some symphonies, above all to the Unfinished, what certain scenery of the Rocky Mountains is to other

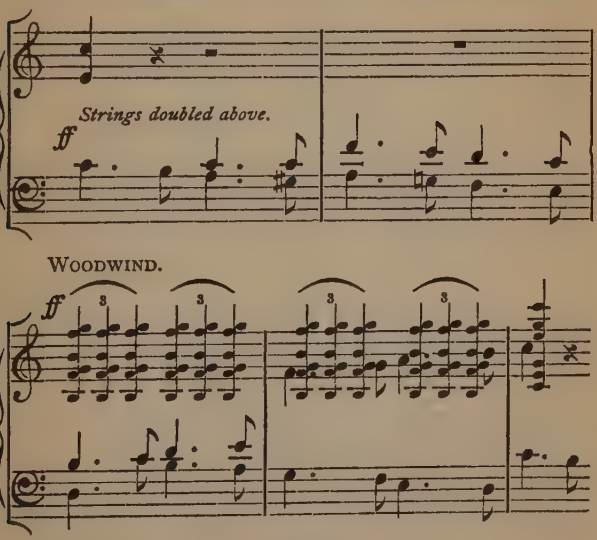
of the Italian Alps. You must view it more broadly, with larger angle of sight.

Here the noisy strum of the strings comes from an earlier phrase, alternating with a swelling vibration of the woodwind and horns:

But the only definite mood is just at the close, whence more light and more delight are

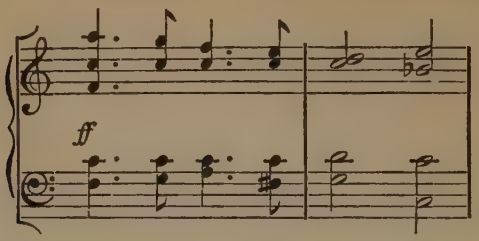




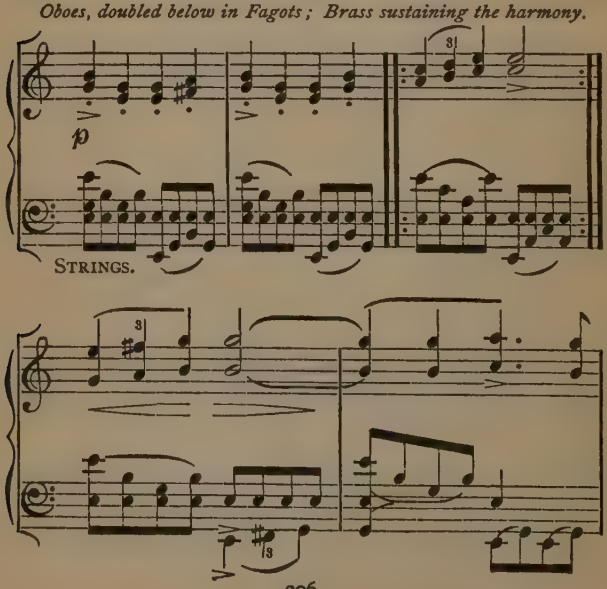
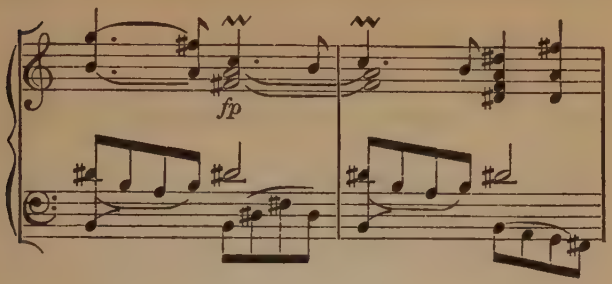
shed on the rehearsing of earlier melody. On goes the constant motion of the original strain in the strings, with continual breaking in of the jolly twittering of woodwind and horns, with



answering trumpet-calls, which increase in vehemence, with an occasional descent into melody. Then back to the main rhythmic



strain, when suddenly a new tune, with strange

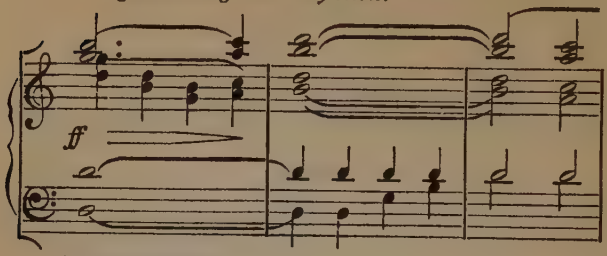


swing and accent, is heard in the oboes and fagots. It is immediately taken up by flutes and clarionets in higher pitch. Then both groups fight for the word, shouting and answering back. Later there is a new accent in whimsical humor.

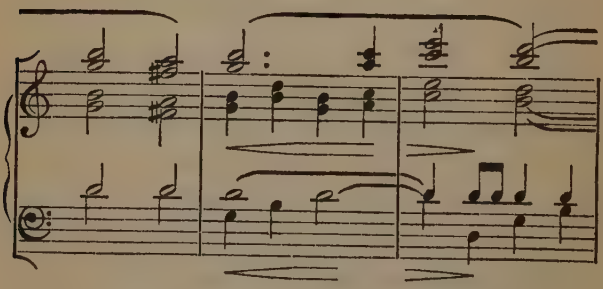
Once in a certain swinging pace of answering strains, with occasional intrusion of chord or cadence from the whole chorus, and of straying through cycles of tonal scenery, there seems to be no end, as if all time were before us,—what made Schumann speak of the "heavenly length." At last, before returning to the beginning, we enter on a broad, sweeping, universal cadence, where the strings give the support of quivering rhythm. Thrice the phrase is sung, each time with greater emphasis; the last, ascending to the highest summit, is absolutely conclusive:

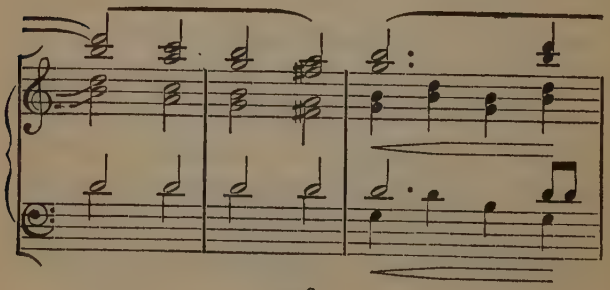
FULL ORCHESTRA.

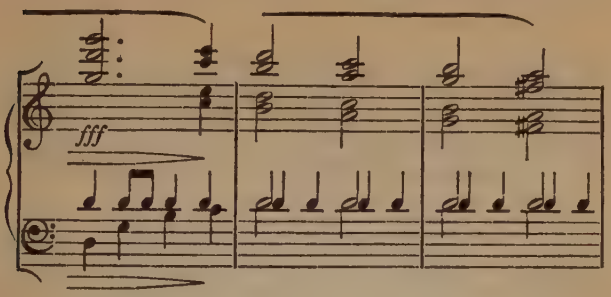
Violins vibrating in unison with the respective wind-parts; Fagots doubling the melody below.



Bass doubled below.



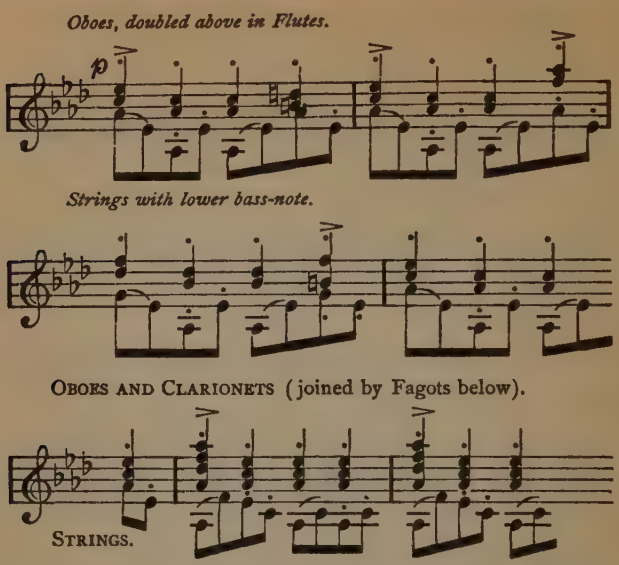




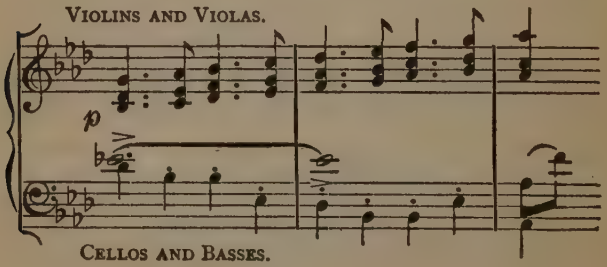
I think there is no mistaking a Hungarian flavor in the second melody. This rhythmic touch of the Slavonic constantly appears, as elsewhere in Schubert. It serves to lend a greater breadth to the Teutonic vein; it helps us unconsciously to transcend the limits of mere national feeling.

Sometimes there seems to be a characteristic tendency towards extension instead of depth. But in reality we have both; there is surely no lack of the maze of discoursing themes. In the discussion proper, which begins after repeated singing of melodies, there is at first a predominance of the Hungarian elfish (second) melody, with an added touch of Midsummer Night's Dream through Mendelssohn eyes.

But the rhythm of the first melody constantly



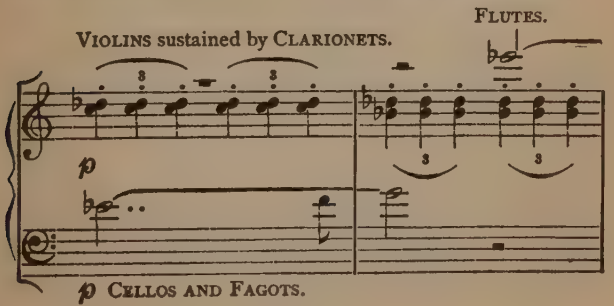
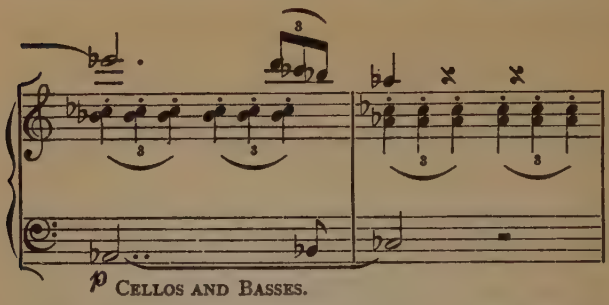
intrudes in the strings, always alternating with the strain of the elves through magic changes of light. But the rougher rhythm is reinforced,



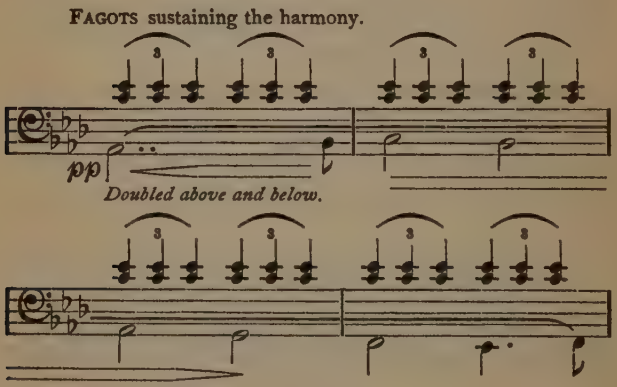
striding up and down in contrary motion, each way in double ranks, until with its multitudinous movement it seems to triumph, although the daintier rhythm is never lost. On through all sorts of lights and shades of tonal landscape, into a series of delicious suspended discords (of which Schumann later learned the special trick), while the rough motion of the first theme is drawn out in length until against the various dance of the rest the bass in strings and brass is solemnly sounding its legend:

ff Doubled above and below.

In a sudden lull from the resounding chorus the same series of exquisite discords is heard most lightly, with melodious question and answer between voices in woodwind and strings:



Finally, again the lower strings, joined later by higher clarionets, sing the solemn chant against quivering violins, in a cadence whence the



original song of melodies is rehearsed to the end. It is all quite the same as at first, but magnified and heightened in the brilliancy of

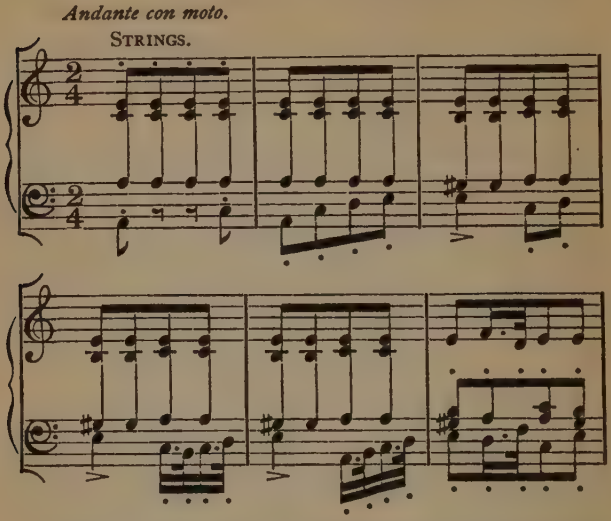
responsive song of tunes, in the mad *abandon* of movement; above all in the wonderful play of what musicians call modulation, of tonal color, like the magician's dazzling change of chromatic light. All is the same except the last word, best of all. Where we expect the final chord, the whole chorus break in confident, joyful tone into the melody of the invocation. Somehow, timidity, questioning, is gone. With the clear assurance of its rounded close, it is no longer Invocation; it is the Fulfilment.

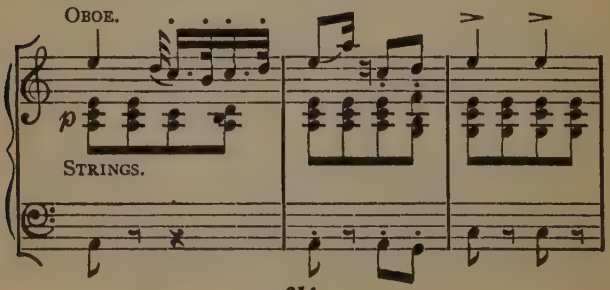
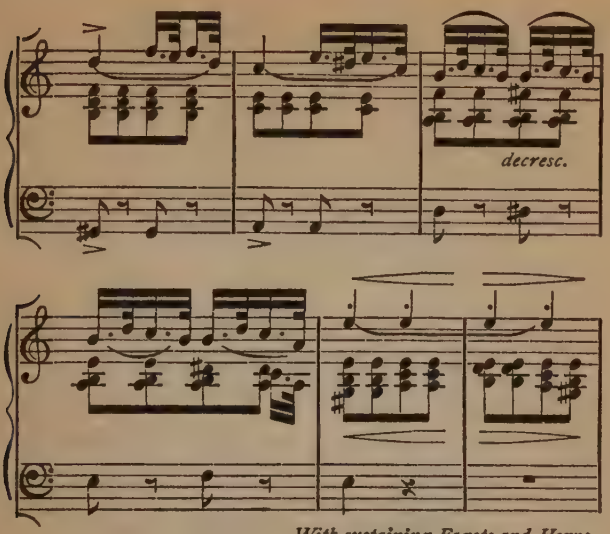
Andante con Moto.

At last Schubert's long restrained melody has a vent. As the Allegro was all vague motion, this is pure, continuous melody,—one golden fabric.

To "explain" this lyric gem seems impertinent for two opposite reasons,—its simplicity and its mystery. It is the typical paradox of the master himself. There is, throughout, the puzzling blending of lightest humor with deep meaning. At the outset it seems clearly a restrained dance. But there is no escaping the sense of secret meaning, as in Beethoven's Allegretto of the seventh symphony, and espe-

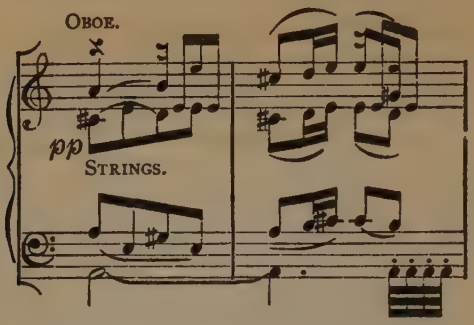
cially in these first six bars, where, similarly, the tuneful bass foreshadows the coming melody:

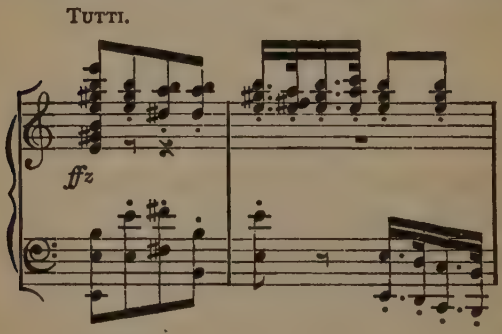


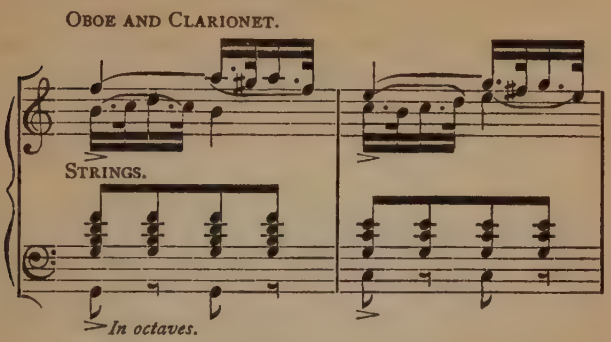
Then to the same sprightly step comes the song of principal melody by oboe;



If we cared to analyze more technically, we could see how the mixture of minor mood with sprightly gait helps the mystery. But, usually, in groping for ingredients, in tearing apart the rose-petals, the main fragrance is lost.

But the curious impersonal quality of the melody is seen by contrast in the little concluding strain in friendly major, with a clear, sudden touch of human feeling. Again, it is like the Trio in the Beethoven Allegretto:

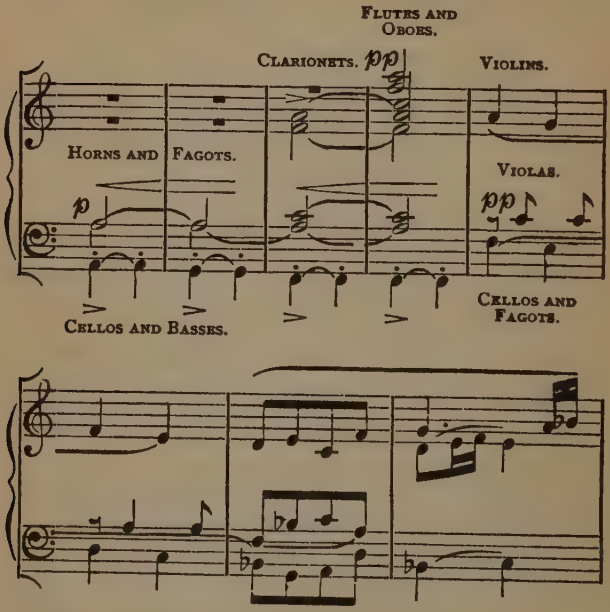


But in the next boisterous blast of the whole band and in the striding of strings in mock heroic dignity, there is no doubt the childlike,

playful humor, pure fun, whence, through warning signs to hold our faces, we return to the serious beauty of the first melody. Still, it is now not the first song in doubling duet;

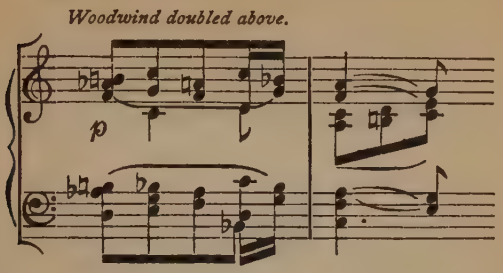
but there is the daintiest interplay between the phrases of gentlest mockery:

How wonderful is the versatile power of music for mirroring humor. Could any words, spoken or written, possibly approach remotely its delicate changes? Here, while the boisterous merriment is so apparent, yet, after these four accented warning *E's*, with all the delicious lightness of fancy, there is not a touch of Teuton fun. It is all Oriental fantasy. Those phases move through various contrasting rounds until a third mood is upon us. Again there is no doubt of the meaning. And, again, it is what we had thought a special Schumann feeling. It is, too, a good instance of the way the greatest masters are constantly using the simplest

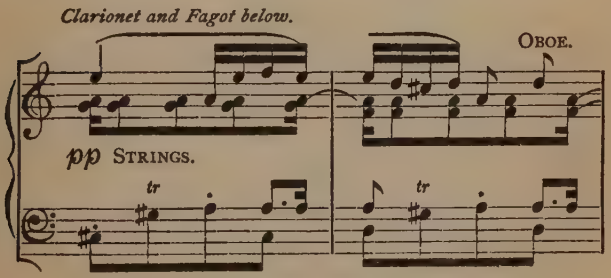
themes,—the proverbial union of simplicity with highest art.

Nothing is more natural than this descent of four notes. To be sure, the preliminary step of the bass down two full tones has much to do with it all.



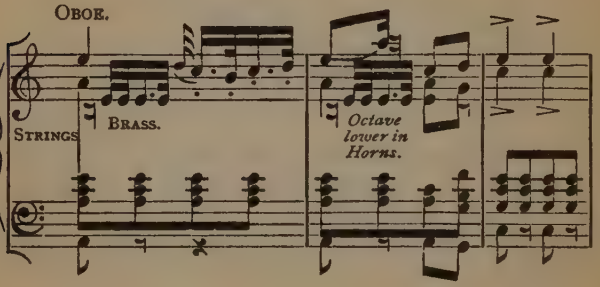
Now all mystery of spirit land is absolutely gone. Here is an intimate, human dialogue,—*unter vier Augen*, as the Germans say; and the

little endings, always recurring like repeated friendly greetings, with assurance of good-will:

But immediately with the descent into minor, there is the momentary slight transition to the hazier realm. For the moment there is a refuge in a playful strain, hiding the head in ostrich fashion. Then through curiously repeated warn-

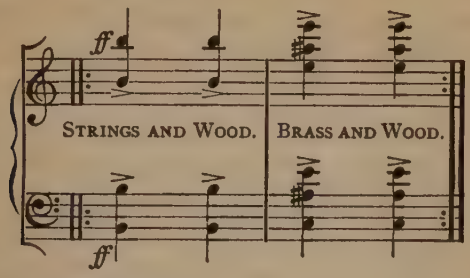


ing notes held unchanged, through shifting harmonic scenery, in the horns, heralds of

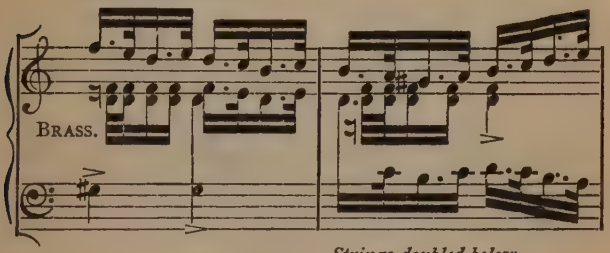
legends, we are back in another canto of our Arabian fairy story.

Now to the original mysterious melody of oboe is added in horns and trumpets, later in violins, a still lighter playfulness. It is a little like a child playing in the midst of danger,—*Media in vita*, etc.:

The side tunes grow ever more melodious. So again come the other phases, similarly enriched. When next the humorous episode comes round, with the sudden noisy burst and the strutting of strings, it is much extended. The woodwind in a minor blast seems to have a difference of opinion with the strings in the major. All through there is the evident tendency to amplify, to repeat, to hold the floor: inevitably the old Schubert trick of talking for

an inspiration. There are strange strokes of the whole orchestra in unison, alternating with an ominous chord, which interrupt the merry skipping up and down:

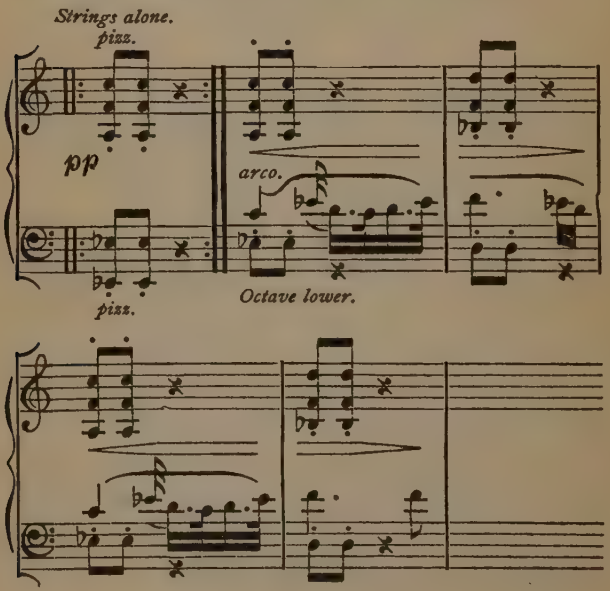


Strings doubled above.



Strings doubled below.

This continues in almost pure iteration, with hardly perceptible variation, always with interrupting chords arresting the skipping movement, until we feel ourselves unexpectedly rushing somewhere, with increasing violence, at last leaping furiously on a final height.

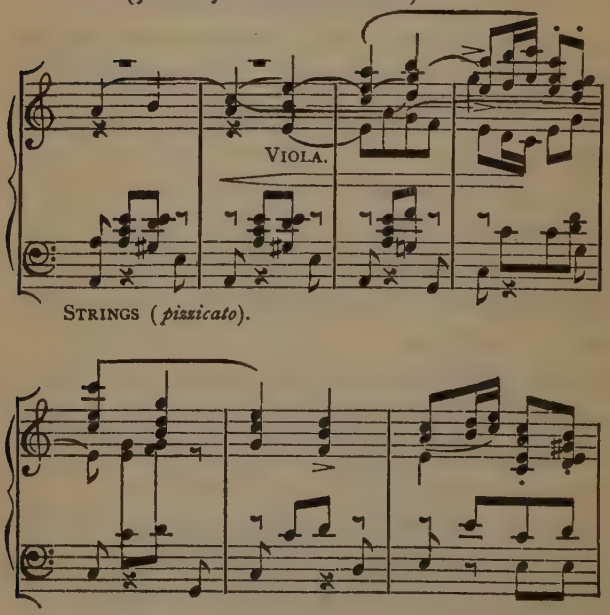
And here is again that best of all, that golden nugget. We knew it would come if Schubert would hold on, like the angler playing patiently for his trout. Of a sudden, out of the wild, insistent chord of mad questioning, after a complete pause, comes a transformation of scene or mood. Instinctively we feel we must not inquire into the magic of the master. A sudden change of tonal color, whose like is nowhere in music, brings a new strain in the

cellos on a former subject in simplest confidence.

There was a subtle way of transition by smallest step as through secret spring; the slighter the outer change or journey, the greater the transformation. No one knew this secret spring save Schubert; with him it died.

The first time, the close is in dreamily mournful minor; the second, with the same confiding song, the close is the clearest reassurance of serene major, whence we continue directly into another verse in the friendly strain of the second melody, with its artless, homely phrase.

A keen man of literary power has suggested, among his friends, a classing of composers in some such way as: 1st, The Prophet; 2d, The Counsellor; 3d, The Friend; 4th, The Tempter. It is exactly true. And we are reminded of it by the analogous variety of relation in one master. Clearly Schubert has at first more of the impersonal seer, even stern monitor, and then quickly glides into friendliest, soothing speech. So comes again the momentary strain of playfulness; again the warning herald notes in the horn of the final verse of the fanciful

legend. There is now a curious chariness in ornament and rhythm, a halting in the last words, as if to add a certain insistent sincerity. The dance has almost ceased. It is no longer the child playing in the lightning. It is more reflective, with a fine little *envoi*, a minor memory of an old strain. With kindly humor, it marches up the hill—and down again:



Scherzo, Allegro Vivace.

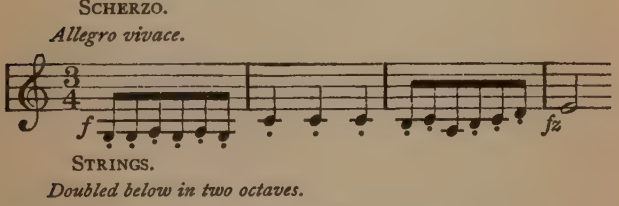
We are so accustomed to humor in words that it is difficult to think of its utterance through another medium. To some, I suppose, humor in music is almost incredible. To discuss such a question is to be drawn into an endless perambulation, losing our way utterly from the central purpose. The trouble lies largely in the scope of the word humor. Sometimes it does seem that, while for the expression of feeling music is far the most powerful of the arts, humorous utterance is easiest in prose. But here it would become necessary to distinguish elements of humor, or at least different kinds, where the danger of straying looms greater than ever. It may not be too broad to say that when humor is largely compact of light, merry sentiment, music is still the more natural medium. Much of the humor we are accustomed to, seems largely a game, with a jumbling together of concrete things, where by accident a striking contrast results. There is much more of chance here than of original, creative feeling. It necessarily lies out of the bounds of music, which has naught to do with visible realities.

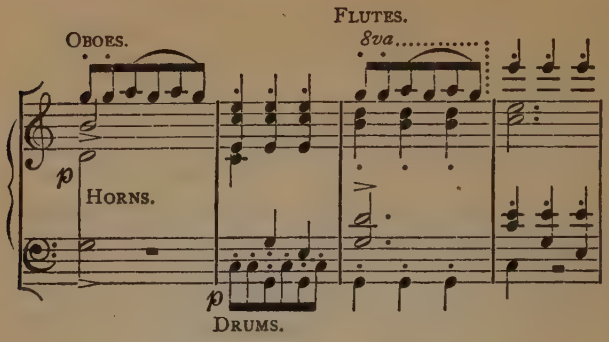
Humor, as in a conventional sense, the rut of common minds, is no more important than a meaningless game; in another sense it may need the highest power of human thought and utterance.

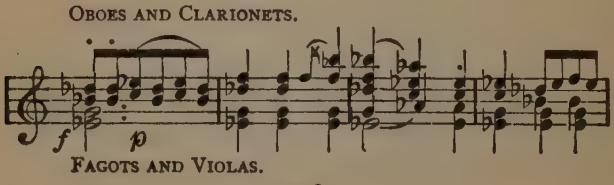
The instinct for surprise, for sudden contrast of opposites, has certainly a free field in music. The very first of the secular masters, Haydn, was eminently a humorist. I have seen a musical child laugh involuntarily over a Haydn scherzo. Beethoven's humor we have studied. It was not altogether amusing. It is that rare compounding of serious latent purpose with the show of lightness. It is not cynical; for a warped, a hopeless sentiment cannot be uttered in high art. If it could, Offenbach would be a classic. Sardonic it can fairly be called; and thus music again shows a distinction of feeling more clearly than any words. Between the qualities of humor of Beethoven and of Offenbach, not to speak at all of the strength, is an infinite gulf. Sinister, even, Beethoven appears often. But it is all, like other universal minds, like Aristophanes, like Cervantes, like Shakespeare, it is discoursing, in apparent play, on the highest themes. It is in central purpose neither

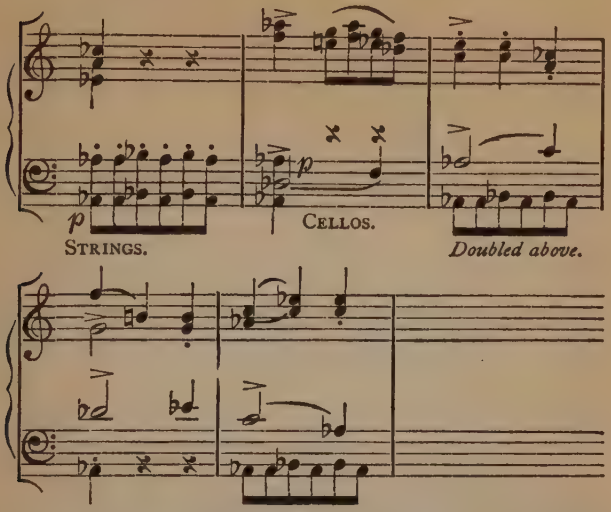
light nor despondent. The frivolous dance in the seventh symphony is really a cosmic joy; the temporary gloom of the fifth makes the final triumph all the brighter.

We cannot pretend that Schubert has herein any similarity to Beethoven. Nor can it be said that Schubert had striking humor; we should not call him humorist. He had not the keen power of conjuring strange opposites; the comic was not his favorite element. He was not disciplined in its special expression. So it seems his *scherzo* mood lapses into mere merriment, not sharply distinct from other *allegro* feeling save perhaps in its irresponsible lightness:

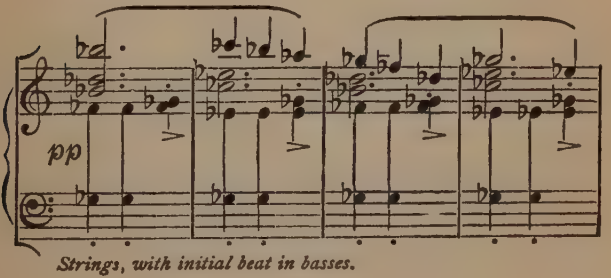


This theme of the scherzo strikes us, in its unison, with a certain clownish heaviness, lightly answered in the woodwind, with playful drums beating clumsily at the theme:

It rushes with headlong speed to a climax in a cousin key, whence, while clarionets and fagots are still chattering away at the theme, the violins and cellos have a duet in a melody where play is more blended with romance. But again the boisterous spirit dominates. Its further career, the bass ponderously dancing to the quick theme, seems all committed to noisy motion, when suddenly the *elf* feeling, which gleamed here and there in the first movement, dances forth alone from the earlier turbulence:

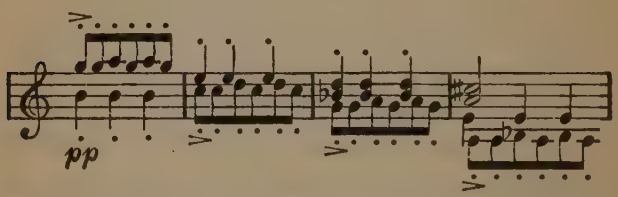




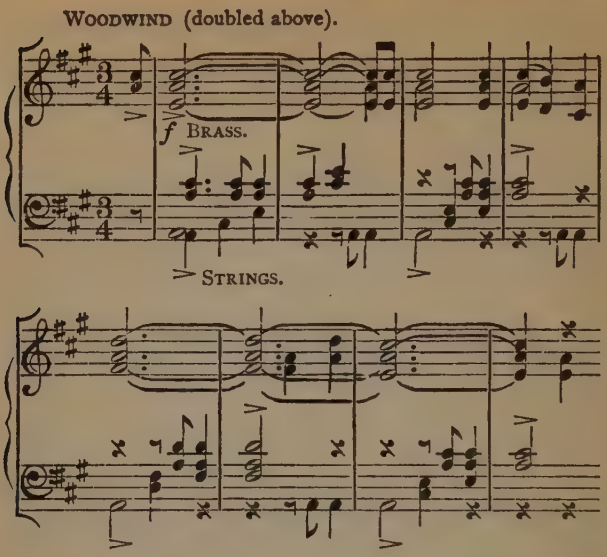
And so through jolly mocking of piping, laughing wood and buzzing strings. All at once the latter have dwindled to strumming of dance beat, and the flute sings aloft a clear,



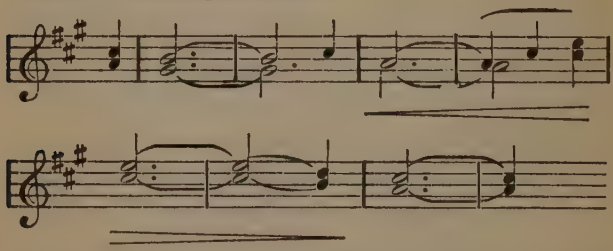
gentle song, and in a new scene in the forest, by one of those unpremeditated tone changes of the poet's.

And now the same song is heard in another corner of the wood, from the oboe, but more boisterously, until the dance can no longer be restrained, and the old fun breaks out much more freely and stormily than before. With the Titanic horse-play there is the sharp alternation of daintiest talk of sprites, mostly of violins, each having his say in turn in the

phrase, ending the *scherzo* much in the original burst. In the *Trio*, though it is still more clearly not humorous, we have surely gained more than we have lost. A poet cannot be held down to cracking jokes at certain fixed seasons. There is something finer here than subtlest jesting. And who shall say it does not belong in a *scherzo?* The first impression is of the double charm of an eternal, joyous swing

and a clear, simple song. It is one of those places where we suddenly hear human singing in the orchestra. In every way there is contrast with the preceding,—in the gentle gliding, in the sweet simplicity of the song, in every way save one; though we cannot clearly see. Somehow, the rate of movement is exactly the same as before, under different guise. The charm of the constant, swinging, sweeping motion, of greatest speed with least show of effort, is indescribable,—like the march of a big Niagara, like the planets themselves. Distinct from the song, the swinging pace is double, the even gliding phrase of violins, ever ending with the skip of the brass. Or rather it is the constant mingling of two distinct paces, the glide and the skip, where now one, now the other is in relief, according to the ear of the hearer. One supplies the continuous element of perennial go, the other gives the perpetual fillip of new impulse. And in united woodwind, blending the various motion is the broad sweep of the great universal love-song, too big for fragmental discussion, pouring out verse after verse, a stream of purest melody, without economy of themal logic:

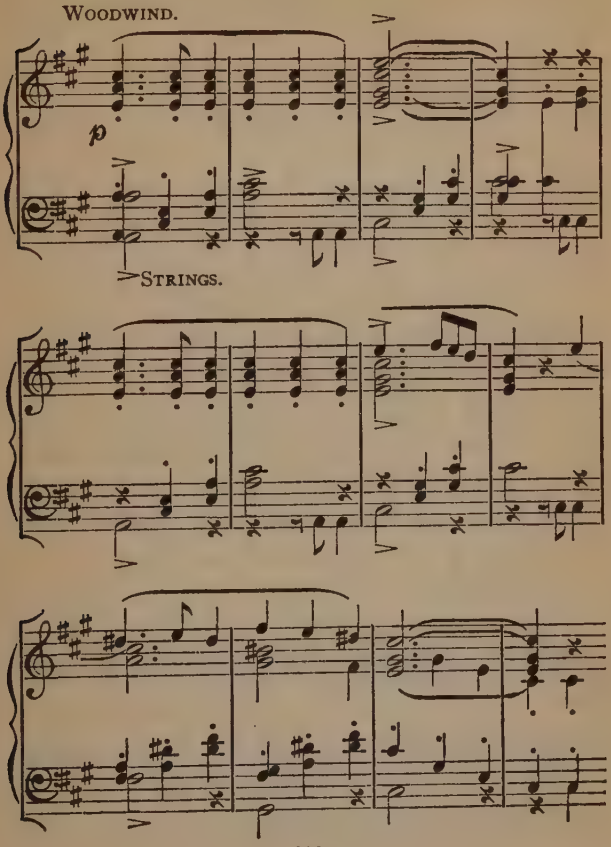


And with this faithful accompaniment of motion the song continues:

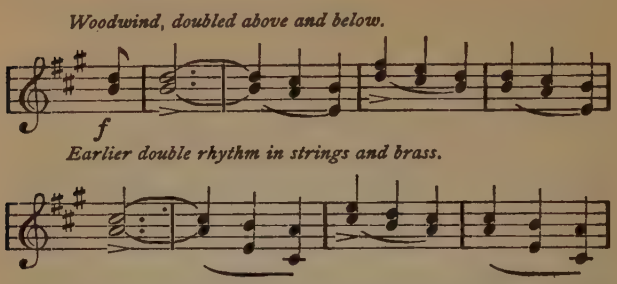


Then off into the minor, always with the loyal satellites, with the same sweep, and with

all the events of a song, surprises of tonal color, of closes that do not end, of those special intimate asides of Schubert's:



Here a broader swing than ever bursts forth:



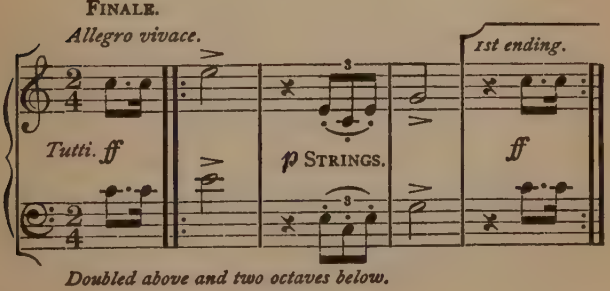
all with pervading completeness and perennial freshness, that is hopeless to suggest without full quotation. Always the dainty reserve and the broad pealing forth, each inviting the other in turn. There seems no reason why it should end, except that all things end. In all this never varying continuity of subsidiary motion, and the constant swing of the song, changing only in its own burden, there is a great sense of freedom from restraint and commotion.

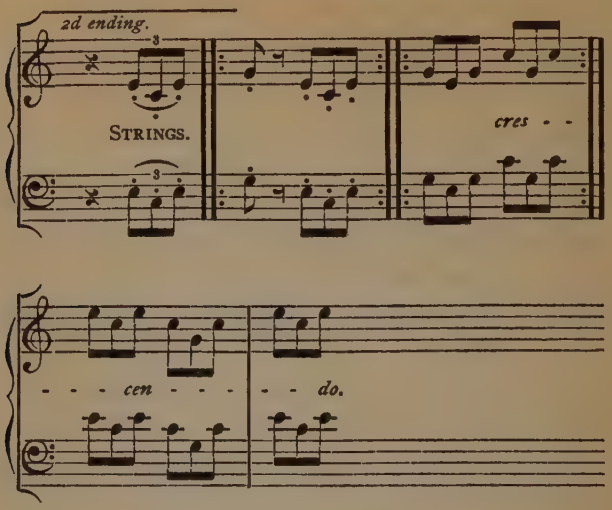
Never before or since has a master so ignored the element of discussion. We feel we have reached an empyrean of lyric song which is above all mystery, above even questioning and the need of discourse. The fall to the scherzo is almost that of the proverb,—certainly from the sublime to the humorous.

Finale, Allegro Vivace.

We have followed the symphony so far, saying little of a general plan. It is perhaps less apparent than in the great Beethoven poems, the Eroica, the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies. But while we might easily have guessed a general meaning earlier, it is, after all, our rule to cloud the evidence of the music itself as little as possible with our own preconception,—rather to have the pervading quality break upon us unwitting, convincing us with the reinforced evidence from all regions of the work.

But inevitably the first sounds of the *Finale* bring us back to the broad scale of the beginning. It is the same vague carelessness of

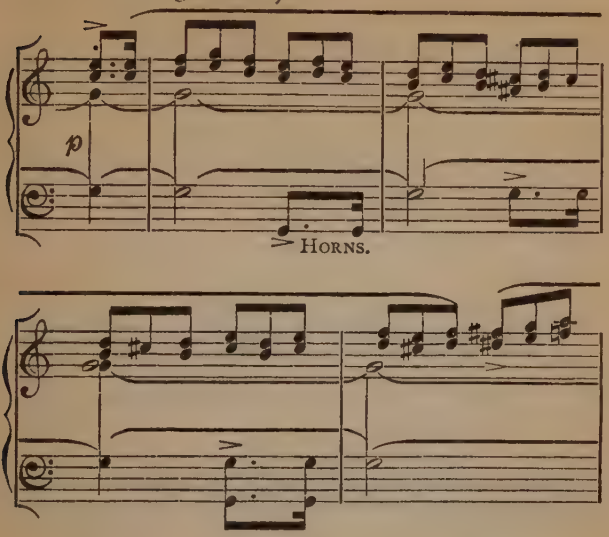




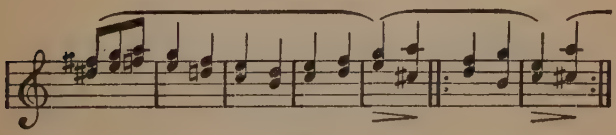
articulate tune; fearlessness of endless iteration of an expressive strain; a perpetual go; an ever-impelling drive that knows no rest; a vagueness of utterance for its own sake.

The first approach to definite phrase (strange how in defined expression there is at once a descent from the very joy we are uttering!) is in the oboes, doubled by fagots below, while the violins keep up the ceaseless flow of motion, and the basses and the horns give the motive impulse, adding something of the pulsing rhythm of the *Trio:*

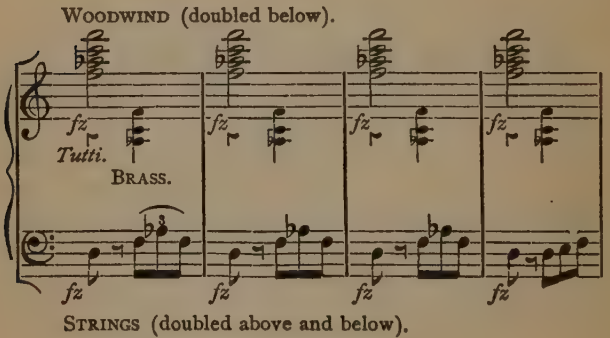
STRINGS (the melody played in quarter-notes by Oboes, and Fagots below).



Most of the charm must lie in the sense of endless, pleasant motion, like the first railroad journey or ocean voyage. And, as in the *Trio*, the accompanying movement once established, the song sweeps freely along, singing its burden, without heed of other voices:

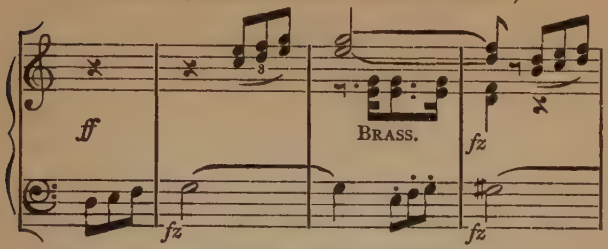


soaring boldly into higher and still higher flights, and ever the unceasing rush of coursing violins and pelting horns until there is an unheard of, overpowering momentum. Suddenly we are in the first phrase, with answering cadences, whence we find ourselves in episodes of sheer drive:

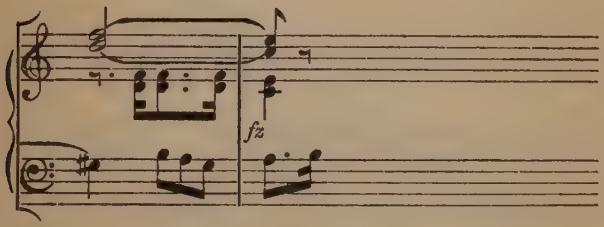


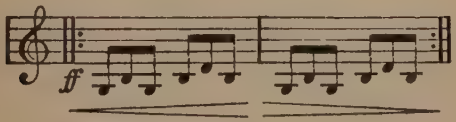
The profound discourse of polyphony, even the lyric distinctness of melody, are all forgotten in this onward, restless, and ceaseless coursing. At most, there are some such answering strains as that which immediately follows the last quoted phrase. Oft reiterated are these pounding passages of pure, rushing rhythm all carried to a furious climax, where the wind hold a long

WOODWIND (doubled an octave above and below).



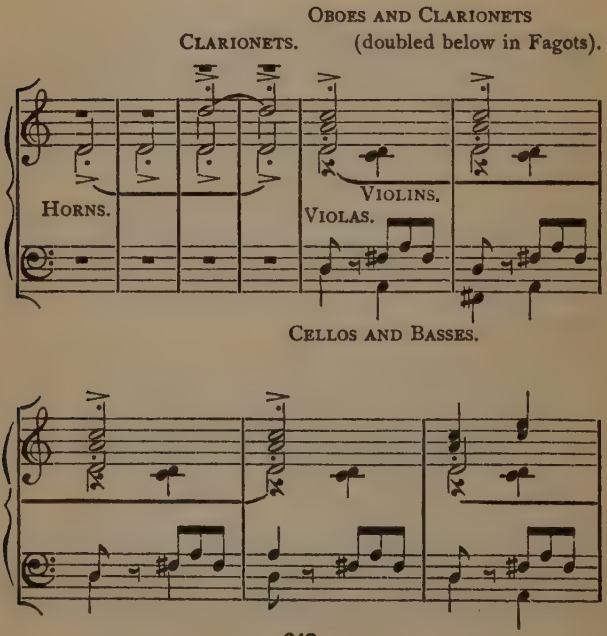
STRINGS (doubled an octave above and below).

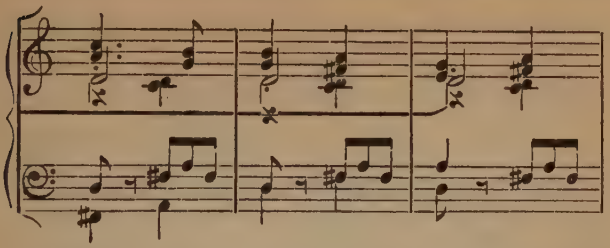


chord, while strings and drums are exhausting their momentum on the simplest figure, ending abruptly in a crash:

Doubled twice below.

After a lull, during which you can almost hear the drive as you see the sun with closed

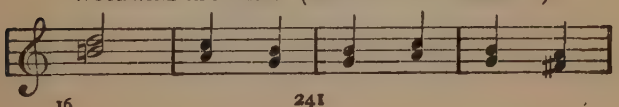
eyes, suddenly here is the melodic germ, the heart of the movement, always sure to come, like gold to the miner, after those long hammerings of Schubert. It is a miniature of the old gigantic thumping, as of shadowy imps. But the grace is rarer than before, and, above all, here, out of the four long notes, a song proceeds, clear and human :

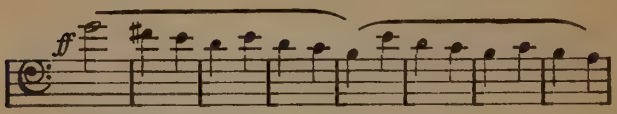




All the pent-up vagueness has found speech, in which it glories, exults, revels, first timidly whispering, then with involuntary burst, retiring again into almost inaudible recesses and hidden scenes; suddenly breaking forth into clear light with glad presence, with unrestrained shouts, and all supported with this irresistible dance. Indeed, we cannot let it go. When the poet returns to the older, stiffer movement, we cry out for the gladder step, as for a native element, and—we get it. Just those four hammering notes with the clattering course. And we are happy in the mere motion, in all guises, higher and higher; now thundering near by, now humming far off,—at last with a seeming end in the broad cadence, while the violins are vibrating

WOODWIND AND BRASS (doubled above and below).

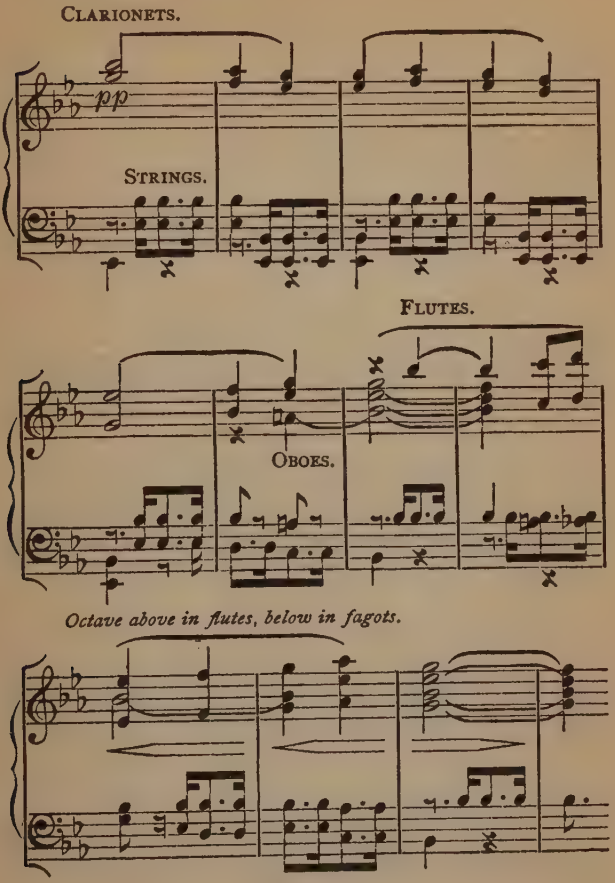


to the same tune and the low horns and strings are holding up the harmony. But instead of ending, the latter basses are shouting out the tune a little varied, while the others are not so

Doubled below.

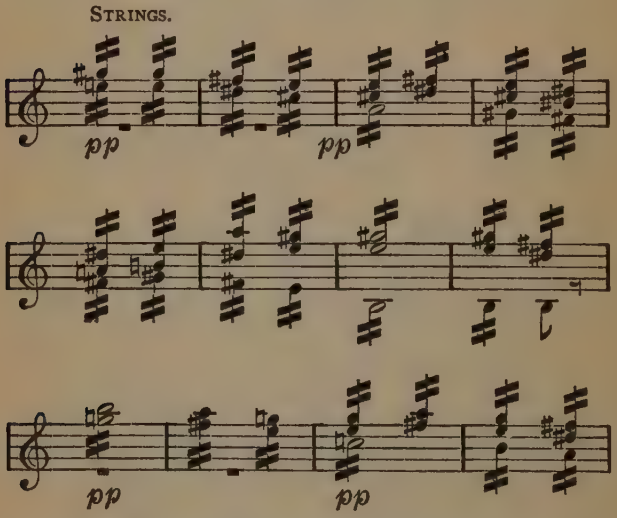
important, diminishing in violence and repeating more softly, while the high woodwind soon take courage and join the tune in piping pitch. But soon we are in a mere vague hum of the low strings, while some wood and brass notes are hopping faintly at the old dance.* And thus dying down to a murmur, we are willing to wake suddenly and, returning to the beginning, go through the glad frolic again. When that is over we sit down and think it over. We can now be a little reflective. So we toss the fine tune, now our own by long search, about here and there, while movement is reduced to the least shuffling in the strings, suggestive, it is true, of the old rhythm. Very softly, in a new

* The hearer must not be literal nor too consistent. He must follow about with quick sympathy of insight.

scenic spot, we sing the song and quietly add an answering strain:

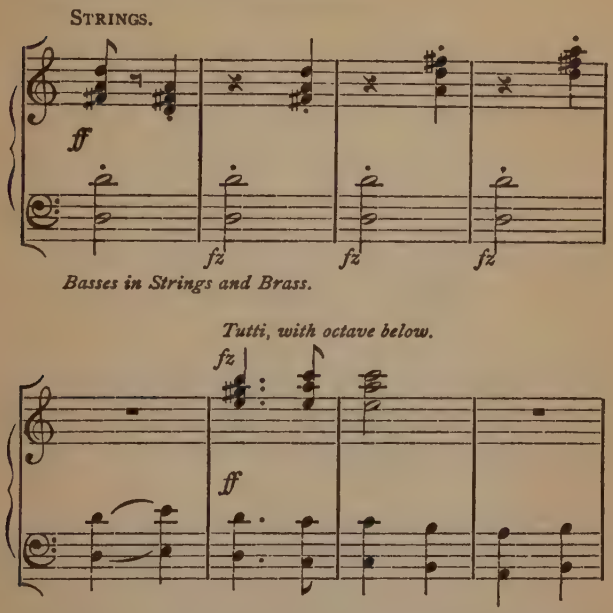


The whole atmosphere is changed. There is a shadowy gloom of deepening woods, of coming dusk. The air is cooler. There is a half sadness of reflection as bits of the theme occur here and there,—in minor, too, in confused, jumbling comparison with others. In the dreaminess the dance is almost gone. But soon a new energy appears. The high violins sing the melody with a kind of trembling anxious-



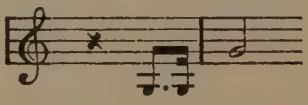
ness, still higher, more plaintively and insistently, the wind gradually joining in sym-

pathy, finally, almost in triumph. And now the glorious old pæan sounds out in basses and brass (giving increased assurance), while the rest shout in fervent acclaim:

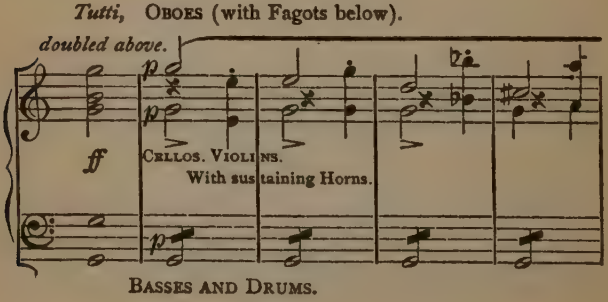
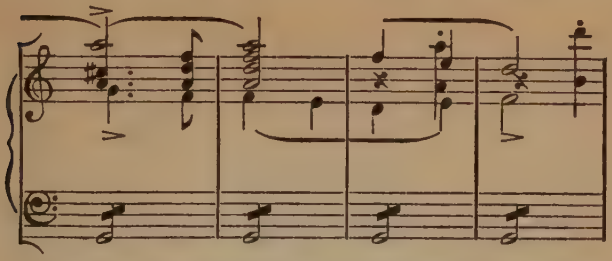


Here it is one long triumphal procession. Nothing can describe the terrible magnificence of this elemental dance. The very ground under us is rocking to the rhythm, not to speak of the increasing maze of voices singing

the answering phrases in disjointed confusion. When at its height, the cellos are discovered very softly but firmly sustaining the marching song, while the violins are mockingly strutting about; oboes and fagots are gently singing a new melody in unconscious harmony with the rest. The only ominous figures are the drums beating softly and continuously. They soon betray their purpose, when, first faintly, then more insistently, the motive is



heard summoning all gradually back, trooping more and more tumultuously, once again to the original chorus;



The final refrain of the old order of melodies is in the usual broad spirit. The first smooth melody of the woodwind is often rehearsed in minor, to ascend the more joyfully into corresponding major. After all the prelude and actual entrance of the great phrase of childlike triumph, there is the loud singing of the smooth melody in the basses, again dying down to a lull. But from here on it is little more than ever eager cries of the great melody, in first part and second. Towards the end, the former comes in four mighty thumps in sheer hard unison tones (almost unmusical), followed by four chords shouting in answer,—question and answer recurring again and again, lapsing at last into the broad cadence. Then the whole symphony ends in the trumpet calls which begin the last Allegro, and in the spirit of *fanfare* which began and pervades the whole.

VIII

SCHUMANN

It is a most interesting question just what and where is the greatest work of any poet or musician, and it is, of course, closely akin to the secret, perhaps unfathomable, of Art itself.

We are apt to fall into a rather palpable error; to confound greatness in dimensions with greatness in substance; to think that the longest works, or those on the largest scale, or those on which the poet has most toiled, or of which he was most ambitious, are necessarily his masterpieces. We have all heard the famous advice to destroy whatever seems in the writing most happy.

The question is, it seems, much more subtle than has been supposed. There is no doubt that just as some men, very like others in most respects, perhaps in many inferior, for hidden reasons will utter thoughts infinitely more valuable to the world, just so the same man, for

reasons occult to himself, will at times be a prophet, at others a bore. Much of Schubert, much of Beethoven, is not the real Schubert, is not the real Beethoven. Perhaps it all comes back, after all, to the quality we have so often given stress,—unconsciousness. It is the strange, almost contradictory element of tonal art in particular. It seems that the best of man's thought is uttered when he is not watching himself; that no man can work his highest, with a perfect knowledge of the existing conditions of his art; so that it seems almost true advice to a poet to reject his own judgment. There seems to be a secret magic in the lack of conscious deliberation. Yet, we are asked, Where is then our *art*, our hard achieved mastery, if we are not to use it as resource in our design? The answer comes with inevitable iteration; all this past struggle and mastery has full weight, but only as unconscious resource, as experience rather than study. So there is no advice here to dispense with toil, to shout forth our first wild emotion, without care of clear and true expression; for the more we toil in reverent pursuit of our art, the more powerful we are for unpremeditated utterance. It is, on

the contrary, the one who lacks the patience for mastery, who fails in this respect to his art, that is most often driven to deliberate calculation and padding labor. It is the early discipline that, never relaxed, produces the perfect mastery of language, which is indispensable for true spontaneity. The element of work, which must enter into all art, at first was toil, later is forgotten in the joy of utterance. While founded on this hidden basis of early apprenticeship, a true art work must spring from an involuntary feeling, must not be too compact of conscious care.

It is thus an absorbing question: Where is the greatest Schumann? It seems, sometimes, that his genius did not find perfect content in the forms hallowed by the highest art before him; that he may have turned to them in a spirit of challenge, to show his mettle. To show the maze of such a problem,—it is quite possible to hold that whole passages of his symphonies are more beautiful than any of his shorter works, and yet that, as a whole, the latter may be superior. There is a tremendous responsibility about large dimensions; so that a long episode of the greatest perfection may be

actually neutralized by failure in proportion and relation of the rest.

Schumann's was a poet nature of the sharpest individuality, yet, withal, so deep and versatile, that we have no sooner found the typical trait than we seem to see it with equal truth in each of several other qualities. One of the most striking is his power of definite characterization. Of course, the mention of such a thing brings us back to the old question of the purpose of the art. And it suggests the query whether, if feeling be constantly refined to an ever more delicate shade, the final result will be as clear as the verbal thought. Only we must never forget that the mere outward significance, the guessing of the word-title, is of no value in itself.

After the climax of the classic masters, there seems to have been a tendency towards exploring the limits of the power of music to specialize a "meaning." Direct utterance of simple feeling yielded to this dazzling experiment. Berlioz is probably the most typical representative of this tendency; yet how simple seems the refutation of his own labels which he would intersperse through the pages. Opera was given a new impulse. It is most grateful to find in

Schumann just the right perception of this power of music; and it is interesting to see how his nature and his training led to the distinguishing quality of his poetry.

Schumann and Mendelssohn were the first of the masters born and bred in a social class whose main function was not the service of another; to whom education and culture were their own right and need. So Schumann was early steeped in poetry; more so, indeed, than in music. And his mind, thus inclined towards a more reflective art, was confirmed in this direction by a course, however irregular, in jurisprudence. The taste for meditation is hard to abandon. In music its effect was to lead men to prefer to explore hidden recesses of thought and of special sentiment, national, legendary, or local, rather than to utter naive bursts of untitled feeling. It is not until our day, of Brahms in particular, that we have returned to the more natural attitude.

Schumann was the first master who had the distinction not to be an infant phenomenon. The most wonderful musical feat told of his youth was a mimicry of friends at the piano; and it is characteristic, too, of his later genius.

There was here an early temptation to translate ideas into music. The boy's channels of influence were literary; it was thus that impressions came to him. Music was not his first native element in which he lived, breathed, listened, and spoke unconsciously. He received in verse and gave out in tones. It seems that this habit found a strong introspective quality in his nature to build upon.

It cannot be difficult to see his aims by sympathetic intuition. To educated men the feeling for logical thought is almost the stay of life. To abandon it is like selling the soul. It is here that religion so often fails to hold the most honest minds. But a generation or two ago this leaning on the saving grace of reason was stronger far than to-day. The further we go from the mediæval sway of deductive philosophers, the less faith we have in the final power of mere reasoned knowledge to win salvation. Modern science, equally in its achievements and in its disappointments, has changed us. We have certainly become more agnostic, and we have been led beyond the true line by riotous fads and follies in all the arts, by abandonment of ethical and artistic ideals.

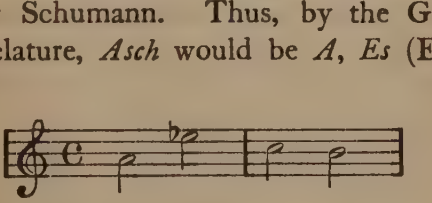
We have gone far astray, forgetting that, while deductive reasoning can never give original or final truth of itself, it is, yet, the only sure way to arrive from one truth to its successor. Indeed, the virtue lies not in the logic of words, but goes back to the saving principle of true *sequence*.

It is this word, more perhaps than any other, which tells the supreme achievement of Schumann. He felt unconsciously bound to add to the honor of his art in thus increasing her power of clear utterance. It is even now the common charge we hear brought against music by those who are rather proud of their ignorance, that music means nothing, is therefore a mere matter of the senses. Every musician, until he sees the truth, must feel the sting. But the fact is that in its own perfect sequence lies the clearest test of the truth of its thought and utterance, —more clear far than the test of logic text-book. It is in the perfect mastery of the art in all its lines, of melodic phrase, of combined agreement of several strains, of the rounding out of the whole, in the verification of perfect beauty of the complete art work, that lies the security for real truth. For this mastery of the language gives the power of uttering honest

feeling; indeed, the connection is double, for the mastery itself is based originally on the fundamental honesty of artistic purpose.

It is the inner perfection of workmanship, not the outer evidence of signs and labels, that bears witness to the truth of the tonal art.

Schumann can be seen striving in all kinds of ways for this hidden power of music. One was a curious device of themes from the musical letters of names of special significance. For instance, almost all the scenes of the "Carnival" are based on notes which represent the musical letters of his own name, S c h a. They happened to be the same as those of the town *Asch*, which at one time had a romantic meaning for Schumann. Thus, by the German nomenclature, *Asch* would be *A*, *Es* (E♭), *C*, *H* (B):



A splendid example of this sort of musical punning are the inspiring fugues on the name *Bach.* Sometimes this seems a mere unimportant amusement; at others it betrays an undoubted sense of symbolism. Another view,

which at once answers two separate needs of Schumann's nature, is that, however unimportant the themes are in themselves, the stress is laid on their treatment. In other words, no matter what your theme, you can talk about it musically. Thus we can talk about Bach and others in music. It must be admitted, of course, that there is here too little importance of its own beauty allowed to the theme. Yet all the more genius and power of sequential thought is required in this discussion. And this element of discussion, extended greatly even beyond Beethoven, explored vast fields in the power of music for more definite significance. It is best to regard all this writing as experimental in the possibilities of themal development.

Of much higher dignity are those poems of musical characterization like the Children's Scenes and the Forest Scenes, where he conjures up in simplest touches the quintessence, not of the outward situation or event, but of the peculiar feeling which enshrouds them. The superficial critic, who speaks too quickly, says, "Of what use are the titles, if the music tells the story?" He cannot forget that the

mere conjecture of the particular title in the poet's mind is of no gain. The music is not a picture of this and of nothing else. There is a feeling here uttered which is certainly associated with this situation, in however many others it may also reside. The feeling is all we care for. Rather pertinent here is Beethoven's experience in the Pastoral Symphony. It is well known how at first he directed the reader to find the situations for himself. But on completion, he gave precise labels everywhere, and added, "Rather an expression of feeling than a picture." The poet is bound to help us to this enjoyment by telling us all he knows; it is not a guessing match. In agreement with this is Schumann's own admission that he always wrote the title after composition. He never set out deliberately to translate a certain subject into tonal language. It was undoubtedly in this mood and with this equipment that Schumann wrote his songs, which, independent of their wealth of beauty and depth of sentiment, came to the world as absolutely new conceptions of the power of music to mirror the particular emotional significance of the words.

But these are relatively the less important

elements of Schumann's art, though to discuss them thus categorically is to ignore the inseparable totality with which they express his genius. So when we have spoken of his sense of sequence in music, we have said but little unless we take into account some of the strongest influences of his youth. In the fore of these must be placed the great German prose-poet, Jean Paul Richter. So direct and overwhelming was his power over Schumann's thought, that one might almost say, Who does not know Jean Paul, does not know Schumann. Undoubtedly, reading the former throws the brightest light upon the intent of the latter.

In Jean Paul we feel the sole prominence of pure sentiment, the ruthless, almost cynical subordination of everything material; the extravagant contempt of facts, of objective personalities, of events, of plot, in riotous revel of unalloyed feeling. Then we remember the sudden succession of humor and pathos, all part of this plan of revolt from the tyranny of concrete externals; and, too, we know that with all this whim of sudden change there is not only no lack of connection, on the contrary, there is in the very contrast of emotions

and in the freedom from hostile realities of outward sense, the closest continuity, one unbroken fibre of emotional experience.

It seems as if Schumann was almost conscious of his mission as the Jean Paul of music. The nature of his art left him free from the intrusion of the world of concrete sense. This influence of Jean Paul's strikingly reinforced Schumann's other tendency towards musical meaning and sequence. It gave him a peculiar power of consecutive musical thought, a sense of development quite beyond that of Beethoven, although in his path. The theme being relegated to mere text, all vital stress was laid on the following out of the emotional thread wherever it may lead. Wedded to this power was an intensity of abandon to an absolute subjective emotion (utterly reckless of a conventional world), which bears most indubitably the stamp of sincerity beyond even the faintest suspicion of conscious attempt to please. Thus lost in the concentration of his emotion, he gives its essence, turning music away from its supposed vocation of mere beauty to the most powerful utterance of high feeling, becoming almost definite by this very intensity.

The most direct examples here are the Novelettes, which are not only greatest among Schumann's works, but of the greatest of all piano literature. By this wonderful threading of the theme, and by these magic contrasts of feeling, there is the clearest sequence of narrative, so that you can almost read off the story. At any rate you have the same essential gain,—all but the dry, dead weight of facts and names. For the very pleasure of reading a story, I should turn as eagerly to Schumann's Novelettes as to any prose-writing. And then it is always equally fresh, with ever new changes of unimportant details. It is not at all the mere tempest of on-rushing drive in one theme; the best is always some sudden exquisite phase of new tender feeling, that by its contrast shows the closest continuity. There is probably no work in all the literature of music so aptly named as Schumann's Novelettes.

The only other influence to be compared with that of Jean Paul's was one within the domain of his own art. To be sure, there can be traced in Schumann's works more or less pervading traces of several musical personalities. Schubert is very distinct in the intimate

touches, the *naïveté* of melodic flow, the surprises of modulation. But it seems that one other master affected not merely Schumann's style, but, more deeply, his mode of musical thought. And with him we come to what bids fair to be a perennial mystery in musical literature. The posthumous career of Bach's influence is not only striking as a type of the final triumph in art of the good, by its inherent power; it must appeal to us, alone from its dramatic pathos. To our modern democracy, it seems that all salvation for the artist, all true and final judgment must ultimately lie with that awful tribunal, the people, quite without regard to its capacity, not of judging, but merely of understanding. Thus a critic in a recent book * actually advises the musician to bow to the triumph of the composer who has conquered "his quarter of the globe," swallowing all convictions of right. Thus it does seem that the greatest danger to music comes from its friends, who yield a certain sacred trust. With them the old ideal of truth, of right in itself, has absolutely ceased to inhabit the uni-

* Apthorp's "Musicians and Music-Lovers."

verse. The only result can be a mad, vulgar scramble for the nod of the mob.

Bach stands as the eternal denial of all this. When the rest of the world was revelling in the delights of the new toy, opera, which all but upset the grave beauty of church music, which drove out the ideal of high art, and left sensuous melody the sole usurper, this master quietly wrote his German oratorios, his organ music, and other instrumental forms in the spirit of the high art of strict discipline, all within the limits of a German province, harassed by the worries of an ill-paid organist. The true value of Bach is still enigmatic. His is, strangely, a rising influence, which cannot even now be justly gauged. There seems to be no doubt that in his peculiar mastery of the art he is not only highest of all, but he is almost incredible in the achieved power of his equipment. But, to return to the man, to show the absolute isolation of the artist from the applauding crowd, he wrote on to a good old age in his modest rut of outer life, with a family of twenty children forming probably the main nucleus of his following, and then died and was forgotten. Let the modern world of sudden *furore*, of mad

popular judgment, think how long was the sleep of his spirit. Just one hundred years after the first performance of his great work, "The Passion according to St. Matthew," it was unearthed and brought to light and living sound by Mendelssohn. And ever since, Bach's power has been steadily waxing,—only over the minds of musicians and masters, never with the people directly,—growing absolutely by the sole force of its inherent truth and nobility. It cannot down, though it can never, in its nature, be popular. It is almost like a decalogue in art. And so, be it fate, or, better, the force of truth direct, there is preserved the work of this giant hero, who single-handed upheld the traditions of highest art in the time of its greatest peril.

It seems inevitable that this influence of Bach's is destined to be borne indirectly through other masters, like some high truth of Egyptian priesthood. We can see some reason for this. The forms of Bach's writing are, save one, not adapted to popular hearing on any great scale. Even in Germany, it is probably only his oratorios, sung in church, that are known directly by the people. And it seems that there is some limitation here in Bach's genius itself, although

it is almost profane to attempt individual judgment. But by the nature of the spirit of religious mystery and man's self-effaced devotion that Bach uttered, he was driven rather to an altitude of deep, high meditation than of free individual expression. So in his writings, almost paradoxically, the actual total effect of separate works seems less important than the quality of his musical thought. And therefore Bach has ever needed a mediator for his final assertion; a new master who will reconcile the profound vein of his thought with modern ideas of art forms. But the great compensation, we might say, is that, while the horizon of all others seems limited, the latent power of Bach seems in an unending increase.

The paradox of Bach's art is a most tempting one; but its final pursuit does not belong here. We remember how, in the first emergence of music from the school-days in the cloister, there was a period of utter abandon from meditation to exuberant revel of individual feeling. Bach's art came before all this. Later, the crowning masters of the secular epoch sought a return to the profundity of the early cloister days. But even in Beethoven this was never

quite attained. There is always a great difference between the analytic meditation (what musicians call counterpoint) of Beethoven and of Bach. There is lacking a certain psychological, introspective quality. After all, with all the later complexity of Beethoven, his whole art is on a different basis from that of Bach. It is originally secular, lyric, monomelodic; only later did it turn towards polyphony. Bach was meditative to the core.

While Mendelssohn brought Bach's works to the surface, Schumann was the great master who absorbed his spirit and thought. Almost a man, Schumann turned to Bach as the highest artistic oracle. This influence throws a double light on each master. It makes Bach clearer and Schumann. In both is the strong, reflective hue of thought, and the polyphonic mode of expression. In Schumann's symphony we seem almost to see how Bach would have gone about it. It might be said that as Bach is the Religious Meditator, Schumann is the Romantic Psychologist. Just one example, out of all this mass of theoretic speculation, will at once give proof and throw light. It is a lightest touch, but I believe it is typical. In one of the

Forest Scenes, "Lonely Flowers," the whole picture is the literal intertwining of two slight graceful themes. Throughout there is hardly a note that is not of individual voice, that is not what the wise men call polyphonic. It is the pure Bach art applied, almost idealized, in secular poetry.

It is not difficult to see how this influence reinforced a native trait of Schumann, of introspection that was sometimes morbid. But again we must see how it affected merely the process of thought, not the outward shape of art work. Mendelssohn followed Bach in the external outline. It could not be expected of Schumann. He wrote no oratorio, no organ sonata. And we are thus brought to the final and the paramount view of Schumann's art.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the entire difference of *form* as an abstract conception, as an element of art, like melody or harmony, and *forms* as mere conventional examples of the other. No ideas are so relentlessly confused. The commonest answer to the charge that a musician lacks the power of form is to decry traditional types like the sonata or the symphony. You might as well confine the

idea of dress to the pantaloons. It is utterly forgotten that form is a quality of creative thought, not a prescribed law. Musicians otherwise of the soundest will constantly tell students that the recipe of composition consists simply in the filling of the classic moulds with original themes,—nothing more. The fact is that true form is absent exactly as this prescriptive form is present. The sonata and the symphony can live on only as long as poets feel their exigence for their thought; they will die as soon as they are obeyed as mere authority.

Schumann in the respect of form has been much misunderstood. It was in the nature of the poetry of his time to forsake temporarily (for its own sake) the great models of the classics. In the German prose literature of the day is seen the chaotic impulse, delighting in disorder, in overthrowing the old, in chasing madly after some butterfly sentiment, and yet, in all the loose mass of disconnected episodes, having a very decided continuous thread. Only the thread is not external, of story or plot; it is a unity of feeling in one subjective personality through contrasting situations. This sort of book was the prototype of Schumann's *Humor-*

eske and *Kreisleriana*, where apparently all idea of form is abandoned; one piece hardly ends when an utterly irrelevant one begins. But our highest delight is to find the subtle connection which pervades the whole. And thus, with all his independence of earlier models, perhaps by reason of it, Schumann seems strongest in this very power of weaving subtly initial themes to a climax which crowns the work with its own justification and true ultimate meaning.

As to Schumann's symphonies, it must seem at first thought that all these elements and early influences promise little. The art and thought of Bach were remote, and equally the chaotic method of dominant literature.

It must be seen, too, that the universal tendency of all musical thought in the nineteenth century was special. In Beethoven was the colossal climax. In Schubert came the national reaction and assertion. Berlioz went far beyond the true limits of graphic depiction. Wagner cannot escape his Teutonic flavor. Mendelssohn seemed to find most inspiration in local romance,—at any rate in the suggestion of special subjects.

Schumann seems to us the greatest poet of

the time; but he was representative of its spirit. And so there is in him, too, as compared with the classic height, a descent into narrower lines of feeling. He is under the domination of ideals and thought of contemporary German poetry, pervaded with the spirit of German legend. Under all these poets of the century, one theme has become predominant beyond its due, has had too much conscious stress. Schumann's treatment, to be sure, has been of the highest in tone,—far higher than Wagner's. But in all, the field is too narrow, too full of special subjects; there is no approach to the noble height of Beethoven's cosmic, universal thought.

The symphony, as the highest known mode of utterance in music, is always greatest with the widest scope. Indeed, it might be said, in a very strict humor, that the true symphony can have no limitation whatever of special subject, whether expressed or implied. We are thus dangerously near a prejudiced view of Schumann's symphonies. It is better to take our usual course, forming our opinion in the very reading of the work.

IX

SCHUMANN (Continued)

With no master is it more urgent that we approach with absolute honesty, free from prejudgment, above all from the presumption that his symphonies are masterpieces. We may hope, but we must fear for symphonies in a Romantic period.

The second symphony has no title or even association. We are not inclined in any direction. It begins not unlike the characteristic prelude of Beethoven and Schubert, which we have often noticed. With them it was a mystic vein. Now, Schumann is of all poets in verse or tone most lost in his peculiar subjectivity. He does not paint objects (though he will give with subtle power the true sentiment suggested in outward situations), and he is not at all philosophical. It would be a great gain to discern this distinction between the element of mystic philosophy in music with a certain universal scope, and what might be called the

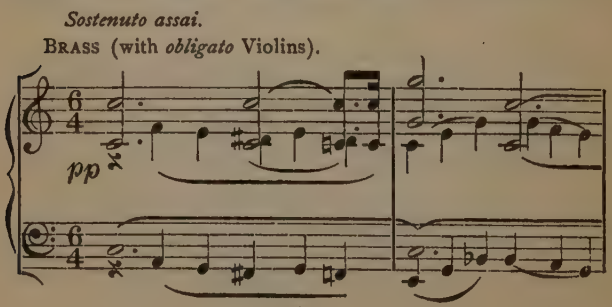
meditative, the psychological, the purely introspective. Bach and Schumann were the latter. Bach was tied fast to the moorings of his creed. He could not roam and grope freely for the lowest foundations. Schumann's temper was for romantic meditation, but his feeling was intensely and passionately special. For him the wealth of emotion in the individual man was too great to stray into the bleaker regions of general impersonal speculation. And yet Schumann was neither materialist nor sentimentalist.

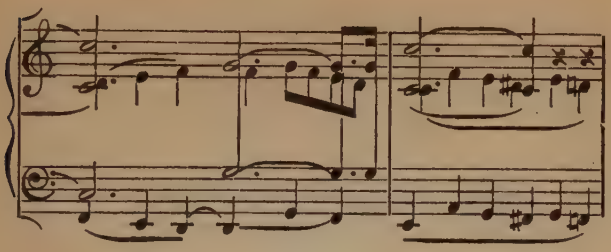
He might, by some, be called a link between the high, impersonal tone of his great predecessors and the sentimentalism of his day and the later materialism. But that is only because he himself held the true balance. He had the right mean; he did not run into riotous, irresponsible hedonism. In the vehemence of his sentiment he held to the lode-star of highest ethical ideals. He reached, of all German poets, the highest conception of woman. With the passionate intensity of his feeling, he had the leaven of idealism, a sense of responsibility and of profundity. If he had lived into a vigorous middle age, it seems that he would probably have matured into the highest poetic

quality. Unfortunately, the very intensity of his early romanticism, his absorption in individual emotion, made irreparable havoc on his mental powers.

In his symphonies we have glimpses, and more, of the height to which he was tending. Ever deeper his sympathies were growing, ever wider his horizon; and there is no loss of intensity of feeling. Yet his symphonies seem to remain still in the field of special and individual interest; they are not what we have so often praised in Beethoven and sometimes in others: they are not cosmic. It is not simply that the third symphony is, in truth and in title, a poem of the Rhine. We are thinking of the music itself.

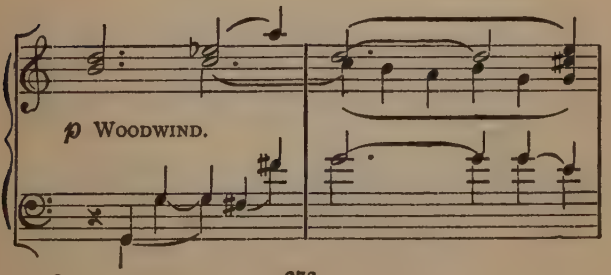
Here, in the second symphony, begins the legendary tone in the horns, with quiet, prime-

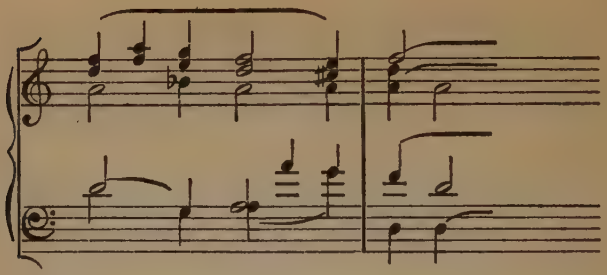




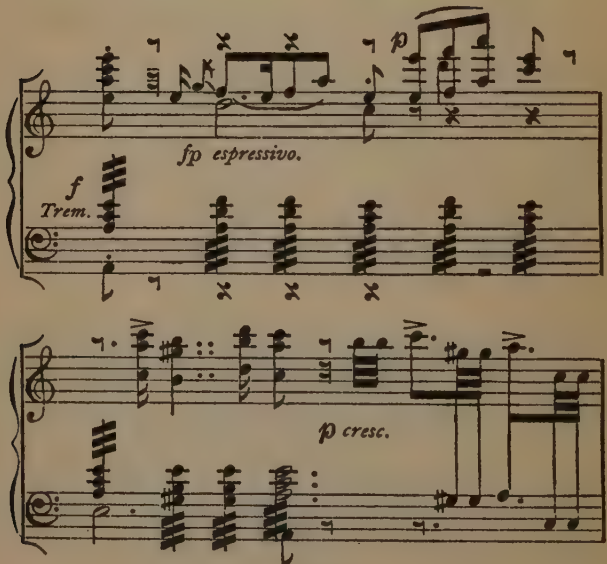
val simplicity, while the violins add an accompanying serene meditation. It is distinctly Teutonic. It has not the universality of the Beethoven Fifth, or even of Schubert's C Major.

Gradually others join. The discussion grows in a more human, a more personal vein. It leads somewhere. Yet, all through, the deep-toned legend resounds. Between its verses the wind sings quite naturally and naïvely:

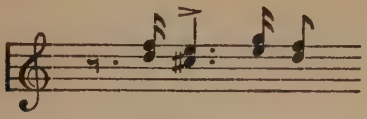
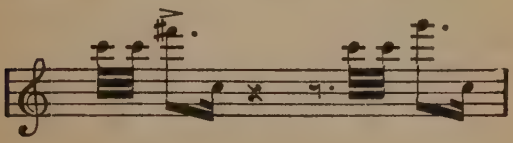




But as soon as the horns return, the strings fall again into their revery. Now with gentle, not sudden awakening, the strings striking into

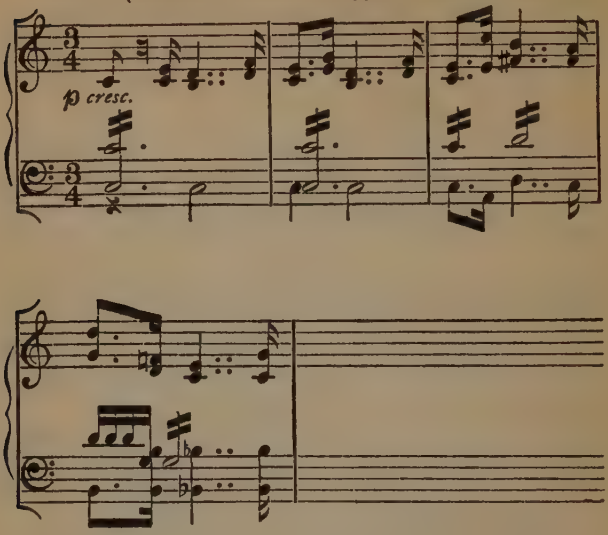


a quivering hum, a new strain is heard from discoursing woodwind, with a kind of heavily springing gait, after the musing walk of the *Sostenuto.*

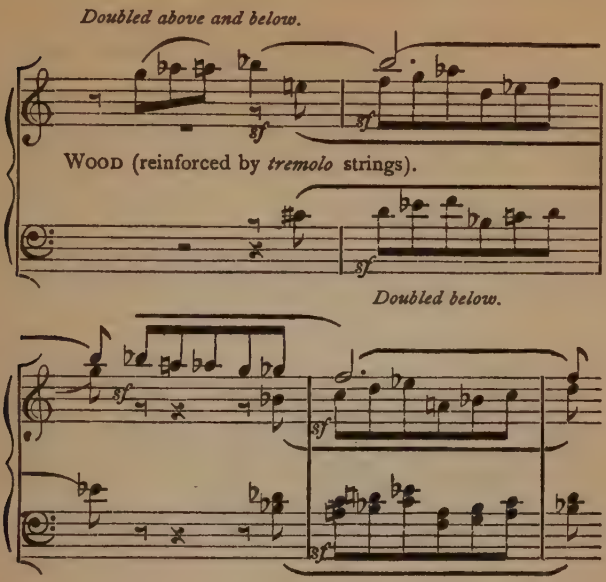
The light answer:

grows brighter, more insistent and vehement, but disappears when the legend of the horns returns. But the other phrase, equally eccentric though more serious, follows along:

through a full and broad conclusion and a free, rhetorical flourish of violins, into the *Allegro*, where the text is the little answering theme that before piped its timid attempts and now sings a steady chant of joy, with that power for endless sequence and flow, which we have seen lurking in Schumann and in his themes:

Allegro ma non troppo.

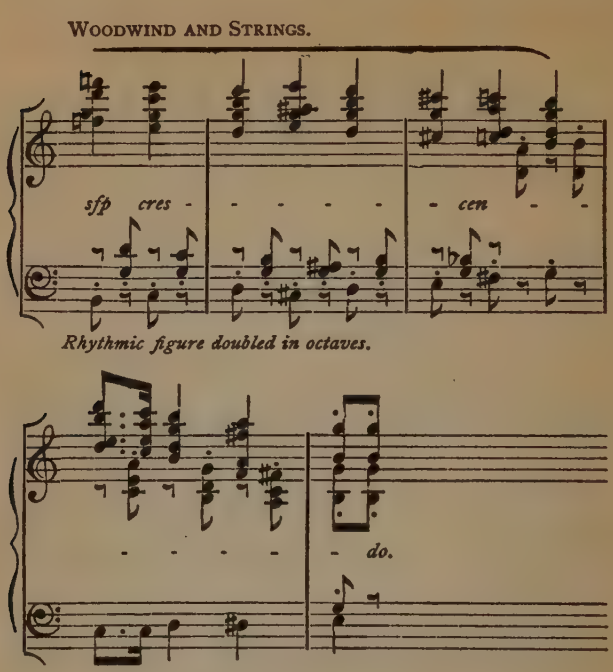
STRINGS (doubled in unison and upper octave by Wood).



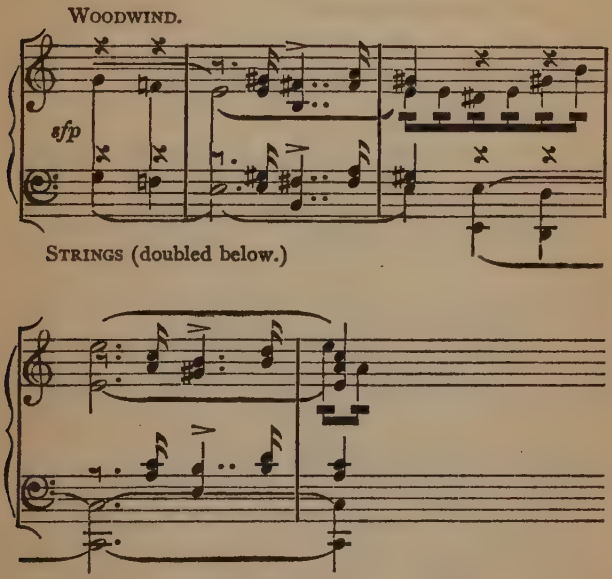
Eventually a climax is reached in this jolly, skipping song, with some change of locality; and now, for the rest of the preliminary statement of melodic subjects, there is a quiet talk, with much regularity of question and answer, on a theme that is not too high pitched, that contrasts pleasantly with the first in the even glide of its motion:

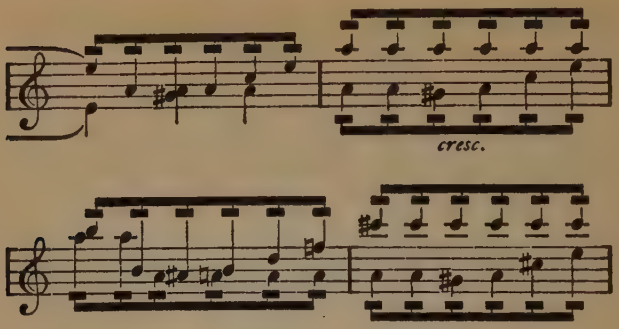


All this chatting is wound up by (what seems really best of all) a broad, authoritative conclusion, in simple terms (see page 278), presently confirmed below in echoing basses. A final verse of the theme closes the statement.

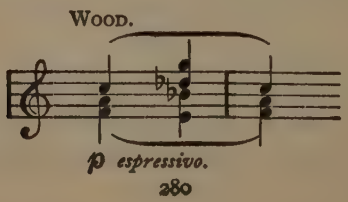
Discussion is natural to Schumann. But instead of the dramatic, boisterous fray of many voices fighting out their conclusion of peace and concord, it is a meditation, a curious internal reflection. The melodic voices seem like

impersonal shades rather than the living figures which laugh and talk in the earlier masters. Poetical it is in the highest degree. But it is less easily perceived as a graphic symbolism of mundane, every-day persons and doings. It is more a dreamy haze of imaginings, which has its artistic place and need as much as any other mood; but it is perhaps better adapted to the

solitary handling of a single instrument than to the orchestral world of sounds.

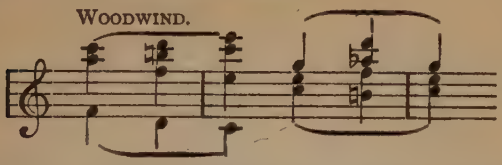
Here the united strings make repeated descent of three steps, while above in the woodwind the first *Allegro* is still keeping us in good cheer with a little answering phrase of violins:

Now the maze of these three phrases continues. A duet in the violins is see-sawing:

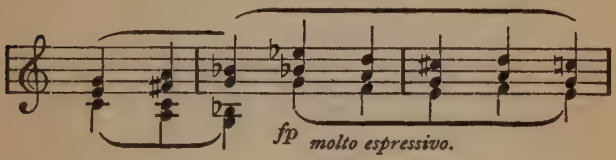


while the flutes are still piping at the skipping song, and the brass, aided by fagots and oboes, are ever descending into lower and lower depths, and new subterranean scenes. When the violins cross each other's path, there is a strange pinch, a narrow escape from quarrel, which keeps us in pleasantly increasing suspense. Soon the second *Allegro* theme is the bone of contention between mixed parties of wood and strings. Still, the anxious suspense, soothed a little by a new thought:



echoed above at each utterance, then advancing again with assenting voices:

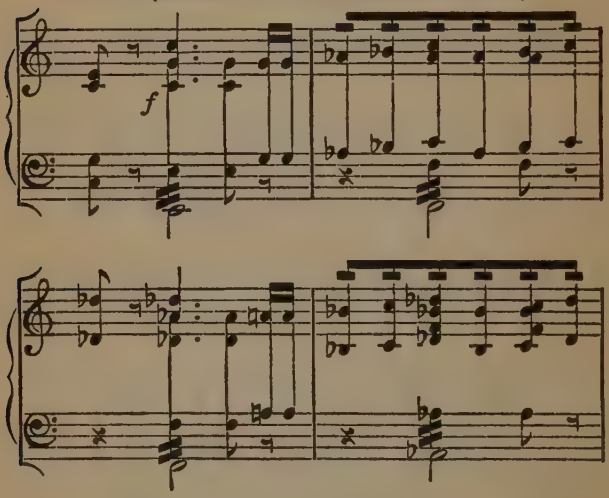


and now through a strain of clearer serenity:

to higher and still more delicate refrains of the anxious phrase:

wandering on through echoing stretches, interrupted by strains of the old maze of descending basses and answering strings. Always there is this balance between joy and pain, this dulcet anxiety; throughout, of course, the joyful dance of the first melody is absent. Now the mood grows firmer, more confident, gradually lifting

out of the depths; then, with more nervous step, rising more and more impetuously, a new energy in the answering phrase of the strings (which has been hitherto vaguely wandering in and out):

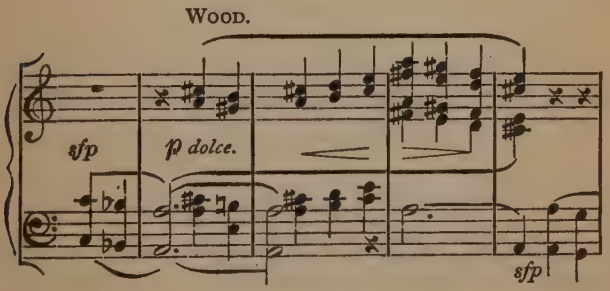
STRINGS (sustained in unison and above by Wind).



And so, soaring into gladder heights, we reach at last the swing of the first *Allegro* melody, but merely the dancing movement. It is again the trio of voices which began the discussion, and the sky is still o'ercast with minor clouds. When we thought we were out

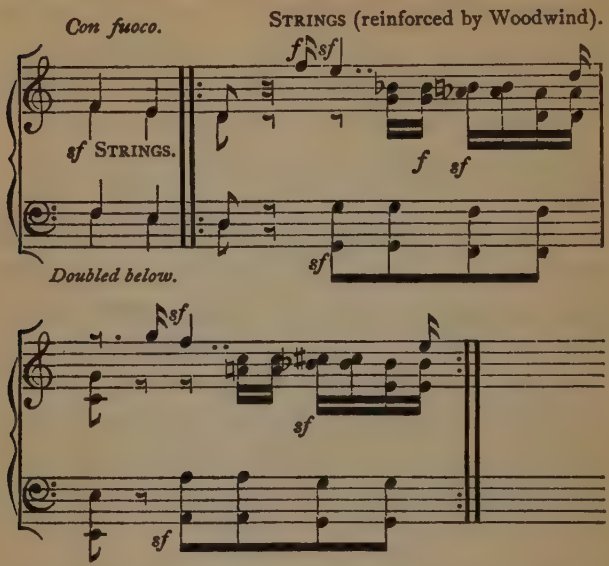
of the wilds, back we must go to the dim, sweetly-sad uncertainty, until we despair of reaching the old pleasant places before dark. In gliding strings, while the woodwind above is lightly piping along, is that earlier strain of anxious soothing.

But at the end of the climax, after a few departing wails, we are at last gambolling again in our sunny meadows to the tune of the old dancing song. It is all as at first, only noisier and more spirited. But when the melodies have been sung again, and the strings descend as in the beginning of the discussion, the wood, instead of replying with the skipping phrase, answer with equally steady, gliding sweep, in contained serenity:



And so through one more descent, when the

ascent begins *con fuoco* with nervous energy of phrase:



and with extended rehearsing of other earlier phrases and cadences, all dominated by the insistence of the principal melody, with springing gait.

Scherzo.

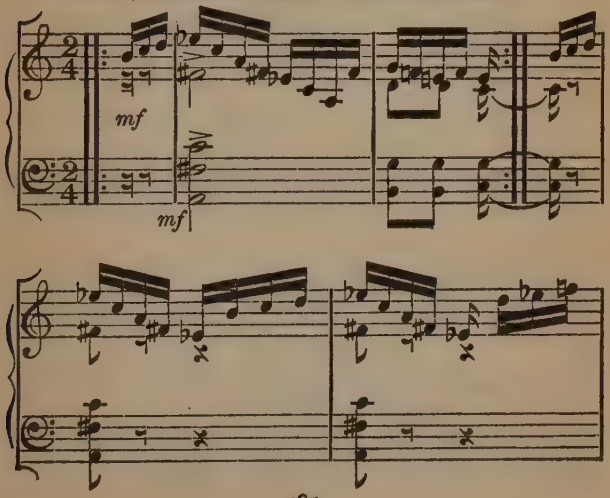
We are not pretending to set forth a plan. Frankly, we have not discovered it. We prefer to search for it in company with the reader.

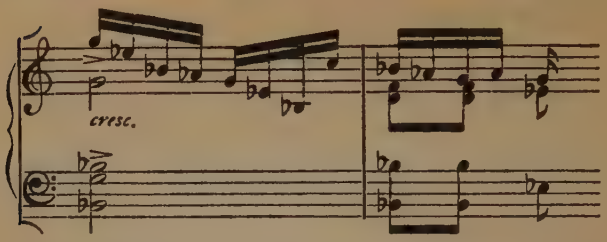
Special connection with the Scherzo is not apparent,—mere general sympathy of mood. By itself, it is one of the most deliciously melodious, magically rhythmical bits of music. But in the symphony, separate charm is almost irrelevant,—is far behind germane pertinence.

The theme is a type of one of Schumann's diverse humors, utterly opposite to his more common sombre sternness. And it has the quality, rare in extended subjects, of great versatility for discussion. The melody, seem-

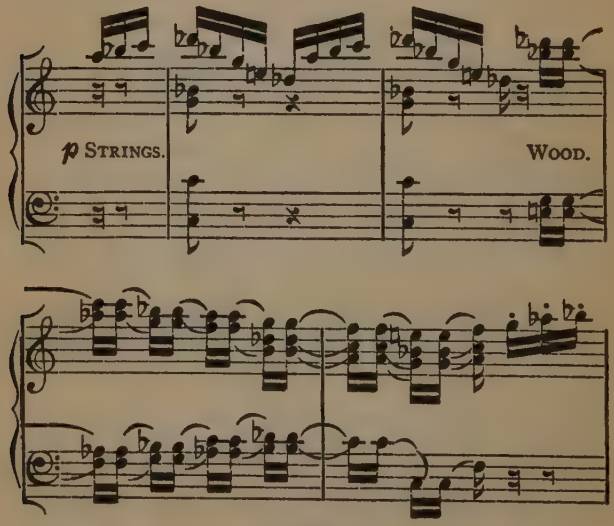
Allegro vivace.

STRINGS (the chords doubled in lower Woodwind).

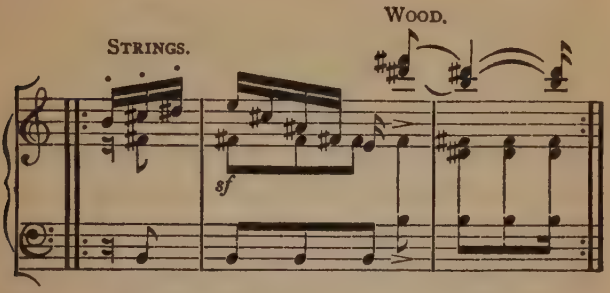




ingly without thought of a necessary end, bounds along through scene after scene. A little later the wood, which have been chattering along, make gay retort to the first phrase of violins:

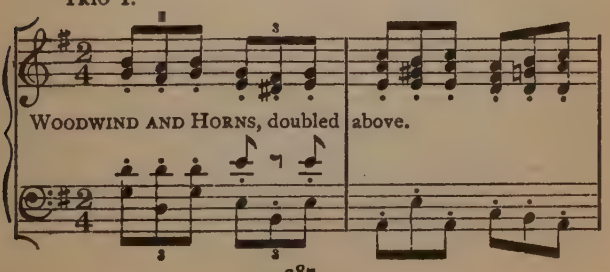


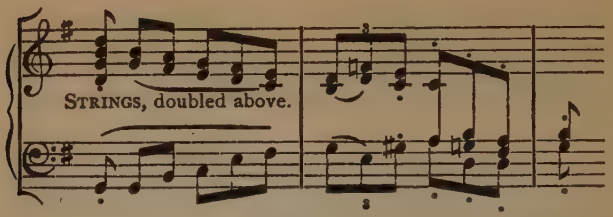
The dialogue continues in varying pitch. In the midst of it comes a most delicate bit of play, at hide and seek, between strings and



wind. Then both go tripping together back to the original dance, whence all is repeated. Here the swing of the first melody has an increased vigor, almost the swoop of wind.

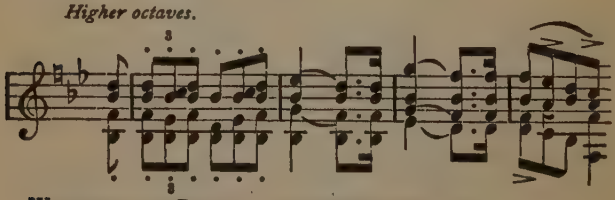
After a friendly touch at the close, the first Trio is contrasted in a confidential, informal, intimate way, peculiarly Schumann's, breaking





formal rhythm. Though quietly playful, it is reflective compared with the bubbling Scherzo.

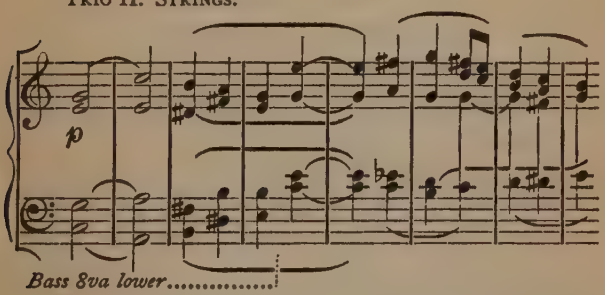
All in graceful swing, the woodwind sing their song laughingly; the strings answer more seriously. The wood continue frivolous; the strings now discourse freely without much attention to the mischievous wood, humming away without constraint of period, as if to themselves, reiterating, lengthening out the phrases at sweet will into a sincere, friendly conclusion, broken into by the impish woodwind, when the melody is repeated. And now the strings are quickly infected with the fun; the wood actually settle down to a sober song:



WOODWIND AND BRASS. *Bass doubled below.*

Then, after returning to the earlier Trio, they gradually are drawn again into the whirl of the Scherzo. But the Trio was evidently not enough of a brown study. Schumann must have his recoil from hilarity,—must retreat into his shell for a good hour by himself. In the second Trio, after the merriment of the Scherzo has faded away, we leave dancing and shouting and settle into a quiet current of bitter-sweet dreaming. There is no glad rhythm, no sparkling tune, but a continuous song, charged with mingled longing and content:

TRIO II. STRINGS.

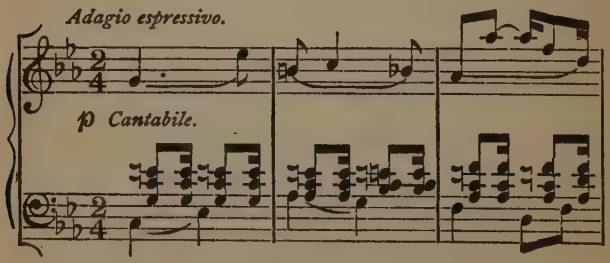
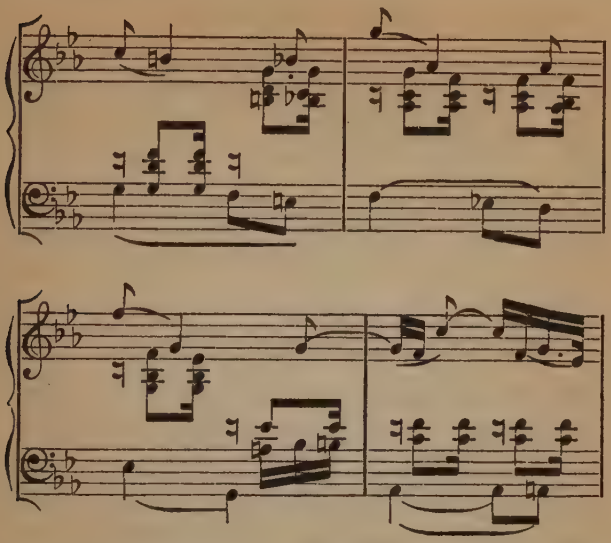


The revery deepens when the melody subtly steals in in the basses, before the oboes have finished, and similarly the flutes break in before the latter end. Soon the dreamy plot thickens, with manifold play of initial phrases. Later

the full song returns with complete swing. Then, after repeated timid attempts, the jolly Scherzo steals in and soon spreads its cheer all about, ending in a romp.

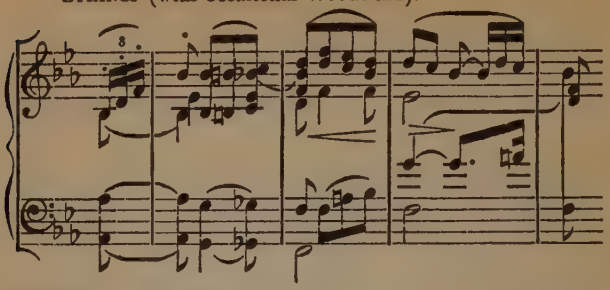
The *Adagio* is the real lyric point of the symphony. Like the Scherzo, in its way it is an inspiration of the highest beauty. And with the Scherzo the relation of contrast enhances its meaning. If it were not for the stern standard we have set, we could rejoice with glad assurance in one of the greatest of all symphonies. But we cannot lose sight of the one highest requisite,—the dominance of one feeling throughout; and by this standard we must measure.

It is not simply in the majestic, simple grace and fervid pathos of the melody, it is quite as



much the ingenuous charm with which a new voice ever slips in with the subject, before we are prepared, without any fuss or ceremony of introduction,—like members of a family group stealing in around the hearth one by one; and before you know it, all are gathered, cosily talking. At the end of a verse of the great melody, the wood and horns have a simple introduction with the strings in a discussion on a phrase that seems insignificant, but breaks out into a most moving cadence:

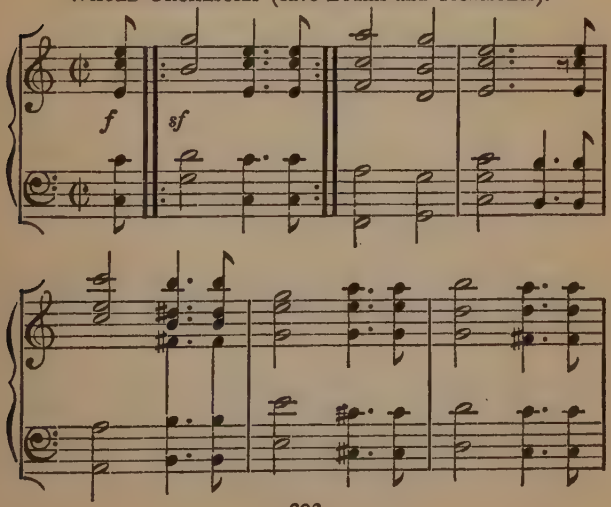
STRINGS (with occasional Woodwind).

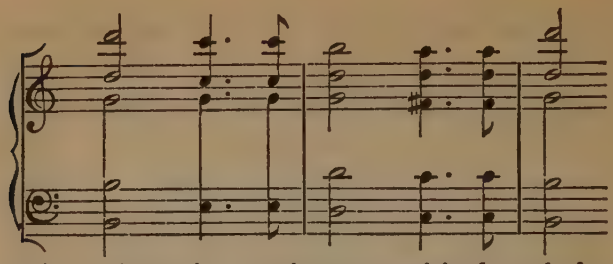


Then on the first two bars of the melody, rung at ever higher pitch by the violins, rises an insistent plaint of speaking beauty, ending at last serenely in a (major) key of contentment. Now creeps in pure meditation, who must have her moment. Even from pathetic utterance Schumann must retire to chew the cud of quiet reflection. The visible cud is a fugal theme discussed by monkish strings in strict impersonal solemnity, from the gloomy maze of which the expressive woodwind relieves us by unceremoniously entering with the main melody. Again the discussion of the strings; again the insistent plaint; and the end, in profound musing, with the lowest strings humming bits of the tune again and again.

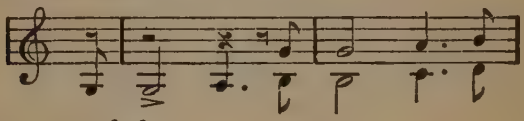
We come to the *Finale*. Here, if anywhere, must be the justification. Let us pursue our quietly expectant way. We have had, so far, a spirited *Allegro*, introduced in truly naïve musing, broken ever by legend-toned horns; a sparkling *Scherzo*, with its shy retreating and periodic reserve; and an *Adagio* of rarest beauty. Here is at first a mere signalling strum and blast. Then what seems the main melody, queerly starting in a subordinate key, sounds with all the band but drums and low brass, all in *Allegro molto vivace:*

WHOLE ORCHESTRA (save Drums and Trombones).

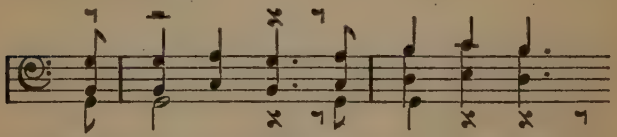




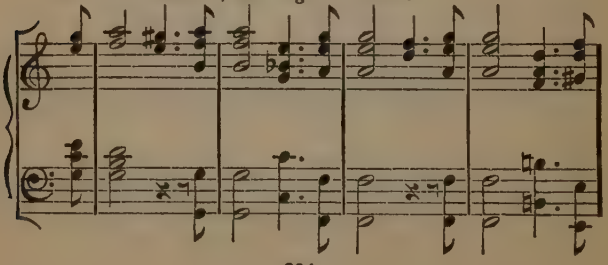
and so, long in continuous, spirited melody, bandying about one phrase :

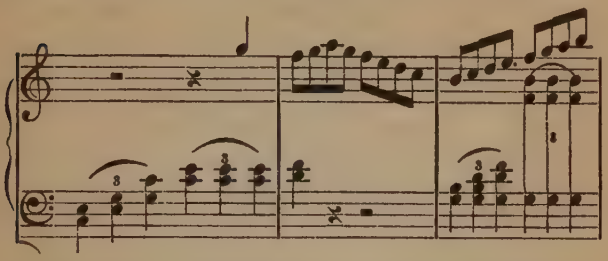


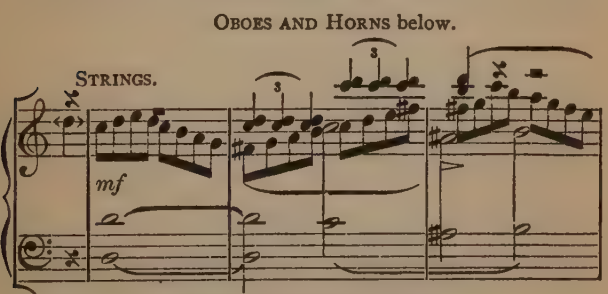
more extended :



and breaking out again in simple, hearty chorus, ever adding some new touch of quaint variation :



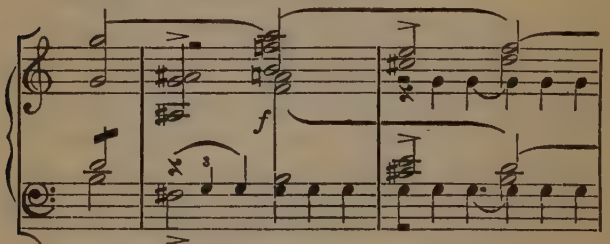
Then comes in the strings what seems almost pedantic for so glad a song. As violas and fagots trip leisurely along, the violins simply course up and down the scale, with no special

significance, continuing in mild playfulness. Soon horns and other wind join. Now is the meaning clear. Through the network of running strings and coursing woodwind sings from the depth of cellos and fagots, reinforced by violins and clarionets, the stately melody of the



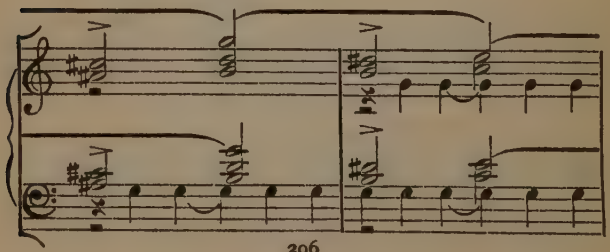
Adagio, with serener majesty, and a little less of sadness, in long notes, making a basic theme for the whole.

All is on a great scale and with a certain reserve. Once the legend has sounded, it does not forthwith sound again, but lets the voluble strings chatter away the more lightly for its absence. But it is always gathering for a new utterance. And so it returns, enounced in a higher scenic region; it sings more frequently:

Responsive play of mixed groups of Woodwind and Strings. Doubled in octaves above and below.

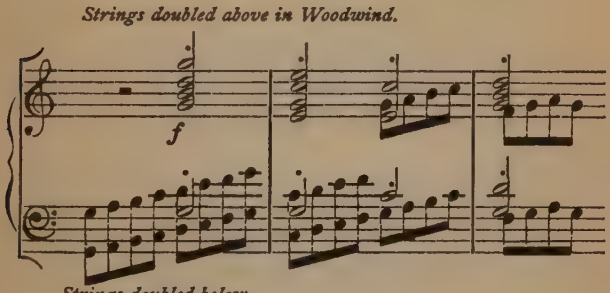


Doubled below. HORNS.

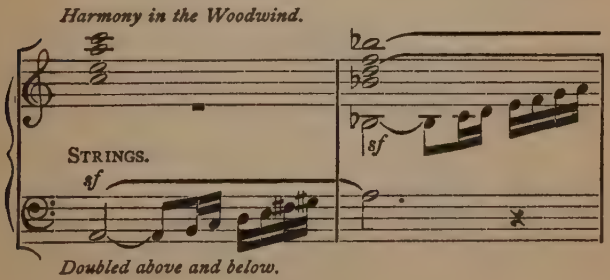


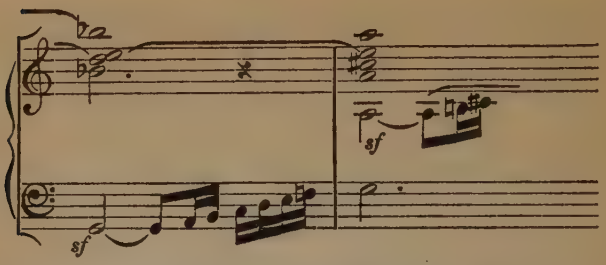
Now all are started singing fragments in a great medley.

The pathos is all gone, but not the depth or majesty. Finally, as half the instruments are coursing furiously, the others sing the conclusive phrase with true assured finality;

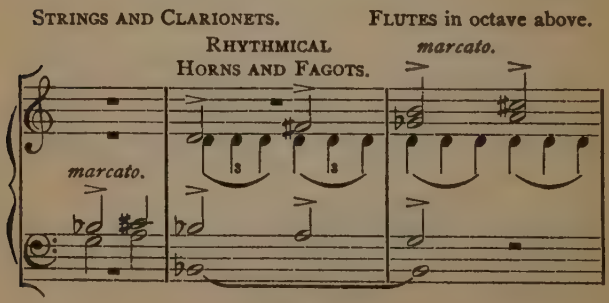
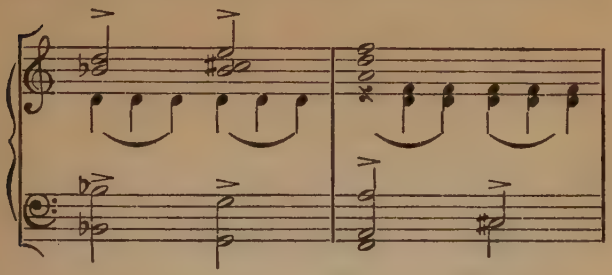


Thence back to the first melody, but not at all with formal exactness. For after the refrain of this theme comes the unmistakable psycho-



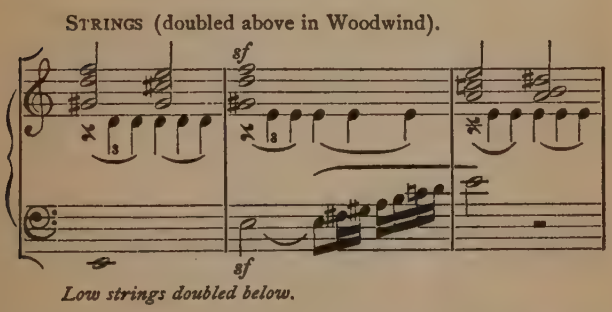


logical moment which stamps Schumann. All sentiment aside, we must down for a good hard think on the phrase of the original strum of the movement.

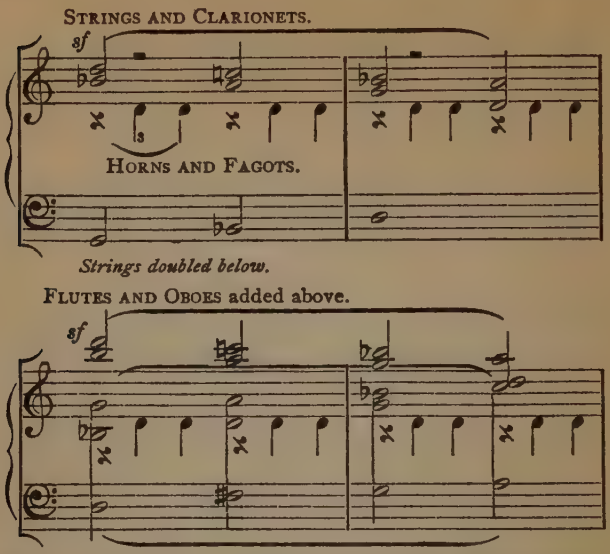
The collision of the running forces, roughly jostling by, shows the argumentative reflection, —*Æneas multa diu jactans animo.* The jar of altercating contradictions is undeniable. We can see the parties getting into technicalities. Out of it suddenly is a more placid, but more



absorbed revery; eyes turned inward; a rapt musing; no resultant feeling as yet; still wandering and wondering.

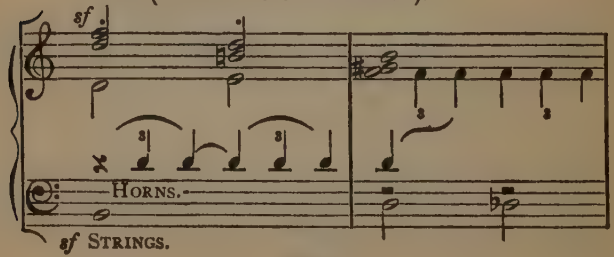
The strumming run, too, adds its opposing course, though, to be sure, the other voices, differing before, now unite against the intruder:

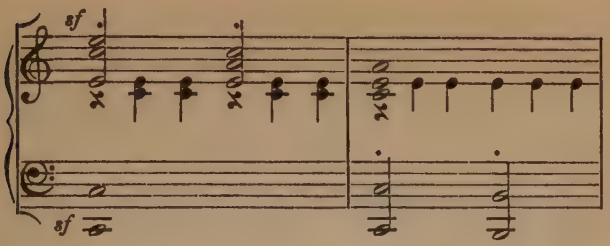


And presently we are in the very valley of the shadow of darkest groping,—ominous:

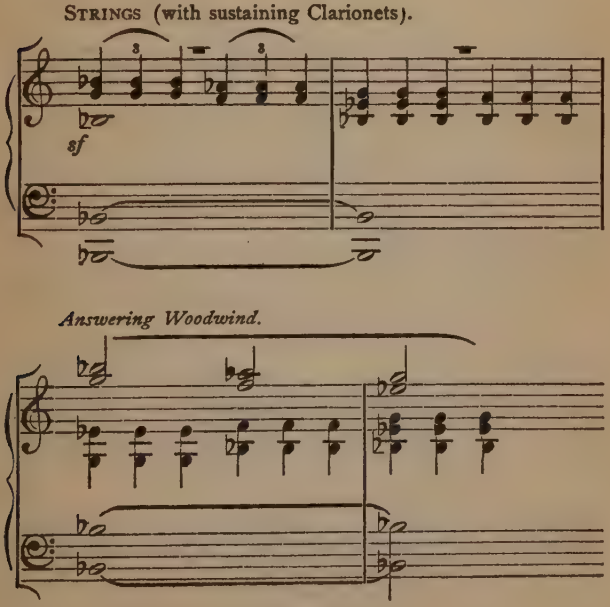


Soon a ray of exquisite sunlight, but always the constant, slow career of wondering thought, —a new, sweet responsiveness between high strings and low:

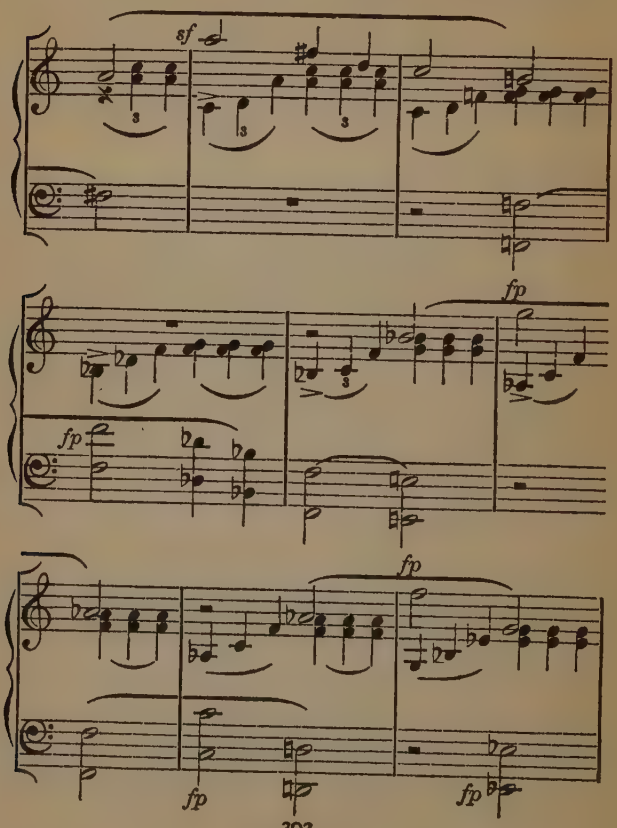




And now, at last, a more friendly, home-like, reassuring word:



Then we fight our way out of the gloom in triumphant struggle, crowned by the song in big swinging rhythm of the Adagio melody, more soothing than ever, spreading its soaring chant,



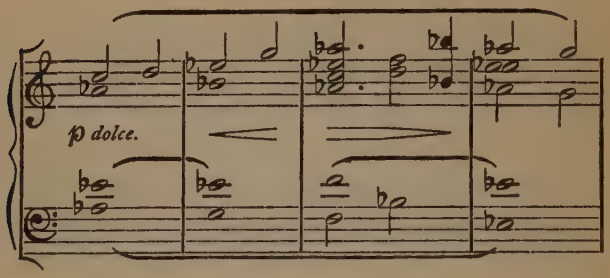
with answering voice far down in smooth-toned bass, in peaceful duo, singing away with no thought of end. And right from the serene song there is that special, intimate touch of none but Schumann.

And when the melody begins again, descending instead of ascending, we have reached the best again, the purest trust, unshaken because deepest laid, answered above, and again uttered with a broadly worded conclusion, maintained with big, still pauses.

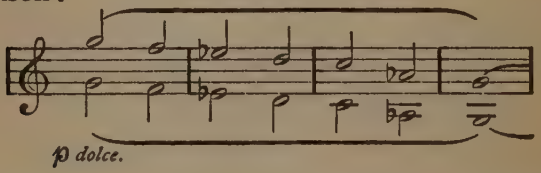
And here is a phase that no Beethoven ever conceived; certainly, never in the heart of an Allegro. It is the poet of Romance, the Jean Paul of music, of unforeseen surprises of mood; and yet, in the most abrupt change, you never feel the lack of inner essential connection and significance.

It is somewhat the feeling of the second Trio. Absolutely without traditional prescription of form, more than half-way through, the storm of the Allegro ceases, and an entirely new melody — outwardly! — begins, charged with that deepening feeling which has so strong a resemblance to the devotional. We might call it a secular chorale. It was the mood in

which Schumann wrote himself "Eusebius"; and it follows here with the usual fitting inconsequence upon the heels of Florestan. Chorale-like it is in the half-notes of the wood-



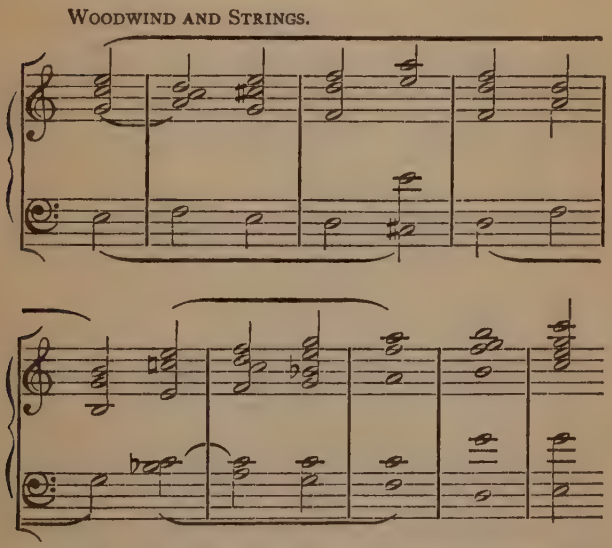
wind, followed by strings descending in hollow unison:



and then the idyllic chorale in a new quarter of the wood. It is strange how merely external is this irrelevance. In reality, it is felt as a closest part of the whole texture. You are perplexed with a haunting sense that it has sung before.

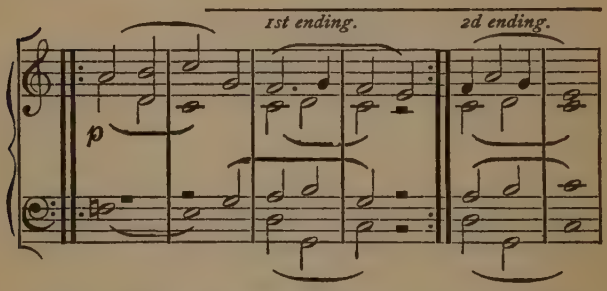
For a moment there breaks in a stirring pulse from an earlier verse; but slowly we descend

into a reflective vein on the chorale. Still, it is not the psychological moment of Schumann. That is a conscious mental spinning; this is mere pensive, sentient dreaming, free of algebraic thought, but with the more perfect sequence of unwitting logic, running on as if with infinite measure of verse:

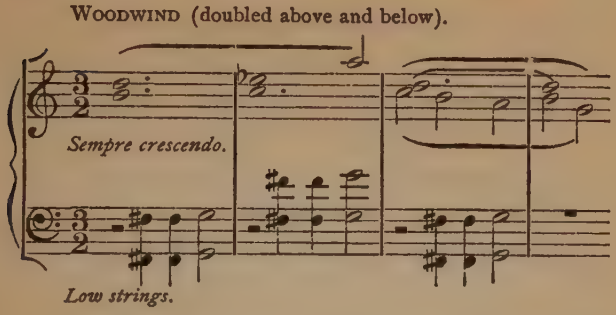


Then as the run of strings reappears, the earthly hymn takes on a new spring, and we are back in the old discussion on the strumming phrase, with abrupt, authoritative ending of the

dispute in a pause that sets all wondering, expectant that Florestan with his boisterous train is coming to say the final word. Instead, the gentle, pensive Eusebius once again enters. He has a new note in his song, a turn of quaint assurance. See how the melody now descends, without the old questioning:



Again the strange retort in timid unison. Then the chorus enter with firm, conclusive strain, still strongly charged with a pious spirit. At the end of one of the final refrains of the chorale, before we have discovered it, an old figure has stolen in; the primeval legend of horns is sounding its perennial phrase, as though it had not been silent all along. And now another old memory rises from the musing of the earliest beginning:



Somehow it does not fit ill with the Eusebius melody. And now see how, while this sings in three-measured rhythm, the legend sounds in the brass in perfect accord of independent rhythm, the old one of four paces. While the former vanishes, the latter continues, with slight intervals, until the end, and, all in unconscious agreement, the Eusebius melody floats above in triumph; below the strings are still striding in the strange three-paced rhythm.

Then in the last great verse, a big phrase takes command; it reminds us a little of the first Allegro in its eccentric gait, and somehow suggests, too, the song, though more broadly, of the first melody of the last movement. Still, Eusebius has not subsided; he is paramount in the great throng. Indeed, he has the very last

word of clear song. He seems to broaden, almost to smile a gentle blessing at the end. But the big melody does, indeed, reconcile the feeling of the first and last canto of our epic.

What shall we say to it all? Surely so much beauty can only come from sincerity. The unity is here; we must bow our head. It is a true, a great symphony. Yet next comes the trying question: What is this feeling whose unity is proclaimed? It is certainly not the clear mood of the great Beethoven poems that we found words for; not of the earlier Mozart; not of the later Schubert. It is less definable than all these. It has not their universality, their bigness of conception. It is in romantic recoil from their classic cosmic completeness. But in its narrower roaming among romantic dells, bold heights, and shaded valleys, it makes a smaller, but hardly less perfect circle of its own. In its delving and dreaming it goes beyond the reach even of our attempt at entitling or summing. And here it is, perhaps, lesser than the earlier symphonies, where, it seems, the intensity of message forces the meaning clear of mystery. It finds, somehow,

apart from the broad careers of its great predecessors, a new cycle of untrodden path. It has not, perhaps, their bigness of view, nor their breadth. It is somewhat confined within the poetic fancy of the Teutonic nation. Yet it marks the truest circle of its own beauty and justification.

In its recoil from the classics, it necessarily lacks their completeness of view. Therefore its very purpose from the beginning is more special. It is a symphony, not of Man in the broadest sense, nor of Life, but rather of a certain very high conception of the Teuton poet, complete within the limits of nationality, and of a more idyllic sentiment, which was, after all, lost in the broad scope of the older masters.

X

SCHUMANN (Continued)

Third Symphony.

Our first sense is of vigor; then it has something to say. It is clearly not joyful, like so many symphonies; a certain stern strength forbids. It seems to have some special poetic content, which it is struggling to express with more definiteness than the usual vague symphony. So it suggests three kinds of works: first, the entitled; lastly, those that are untitled and vague even to the composer; between them are those that, while untitled, are definite to the composer, and are meant to show a meaning purely on the musical merits and by musical means, without help of verbal label.

The question rises: Is it right to set the mind puzzling? Music is not a graphic art, nor explanatory, nor logical, but purely emotional. Hence, why should not the master tell all he knows, and let the hearer enjoy. Still, to withhold the literal label does seem to save

music from the ridiculous position of being eked out by words in its purpose. What is the answer? We must get over the fact that music is not meant to be graphic. Even if music were to paint you a perfect picture with all the details, or tell you a thrilling story, it would really do nothing. You would catch it much better in colors or in words. Therefore the element of making clear an outside meaning must be abandoned as, after all, frivolous, irrelevant, unworthy. Even if we are accused of false pretence in writing down a title, we must simply bear it. But, of course, we must not really try this tonal painting. Only in so far as we may, in writing, be burdened with the sense of a subject, may we tell the hearer this in words, and ask him to feel with us, at every risk of false accusation. All the time we set him guessing is wasted. We must never try to ennoble our art by setting it on a throne of verbal significance. If it communicates a poetic mood, it does enough and the highest. Whether you call your work a Rhine Symphony or a Legendary Symphony or Feudal or Primeval, anything within the great field suggestive of the particular direction of the soaring

thought or the color of the spirit's mood will be enough. Whether it be just the Rhine or the Ganges is not necessarily a real gain.

Music must not fear to be irrelevant even with itself; for instance, to rush off into an apparently frivolous by-way. For the very unconscious impulse that suggests the flight is more relevant than any carefully conscious plan and keeping to the plan. And thus the very attempt at consistent picturing defeats the whole object of spontaneous expression of feeling. It will take care of itself, and prove its own verification.

In this symphony, for example, knowing the "Rhine" title (which Schumann suggested), we should describe our impressions in certain words; not knowing it, with certain others. But in any case, these words are not the symphony itself. They would change at each writing. They are only meant to suggest. And whether we know the title or not, if we are faithful to the feeling and intelligent in our art, we are bound to reflect the mood, in whatever words. In some we come nearer to the original feeling than in others.

Of course, there is no doubt that in some

cases the particular mood, if specially defined, may be more difficult to catch than in others; for instance, where there is a dream of particular national legend or locality, to a foreign ear. And here again the answer must be to the composer: Don't waste time in puzzling the hearer. Tell him all possible. Let him enjoy with you.

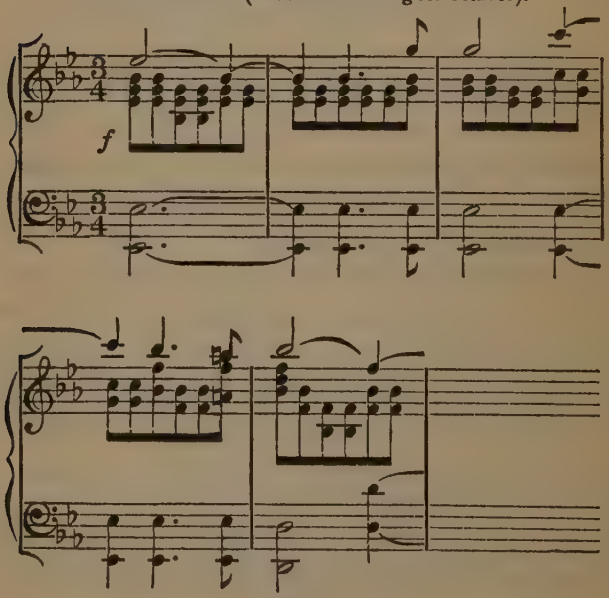
But in any case it ought to be purely beautiful. Only in so far as a special subject dances before the mind of the writer, may the uninformed listener puzzle to a certain degree. Beauty and meaning are blended to an undistinguishable degree. Where the meaning is vaguest for definite words,—as in Mozart—we are apt to talk merely of beauty; where significance has the stress, beauty is almost lost sight of. There is no dividing line. Beauty ought not to be in itself the only purpose,—nor significance to threaten to usurp its sway. Significance must be unconscious, unstriving. But both are equally important. Meaning of poetic mood leavens the vague beauty of sound to a wholesome message.

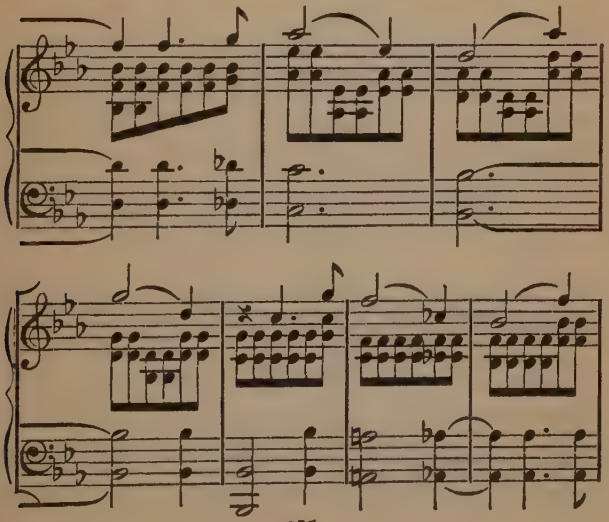
It is not unfair, then, to take every hint the master gives. So, first, we must see how every

title is German. "Dritte Symphonie" it is, and begins "Lebhaft,"—no foreign *Allegro.* This is all not really essential.

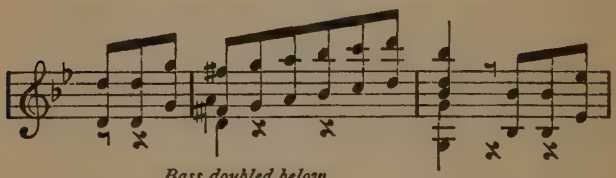
Strong and rugged is the central quality, firmly standing on the basic tone, which it is loth to part with, which holds a lingering pedal point beyond its natural domain. The melody is strongly grounded in the tonic chord. It is

Lebhaft.

FULL ORCHESTRA (Woodwind in higher octaves).

not flowing, almost severe and rough; resolute, not insinuating.

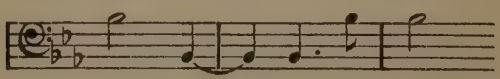
But the less *cantabile* the melody, the more continuous and unending,—the compensation in all things. Striking melody must have an early end by the very requirement of its symmetric beauty; in its charm lies the necessity for its early conclusion. So, conversely, the less of melodic rotundity, the more spontaneous and unlimited the progress. So here there is much of that special power for sequence, for the course of narrative, that Schumann was

foremost to develop. These sequences (from the end of the first quotation) seem as if they might well go on forever.

Soon the original refrain is taken up with greater chorus than before. The brass, with sonorous solemnity, is strongly present throughout the symphony. In the repetition, a phrase of new vivacity appears in the answer:



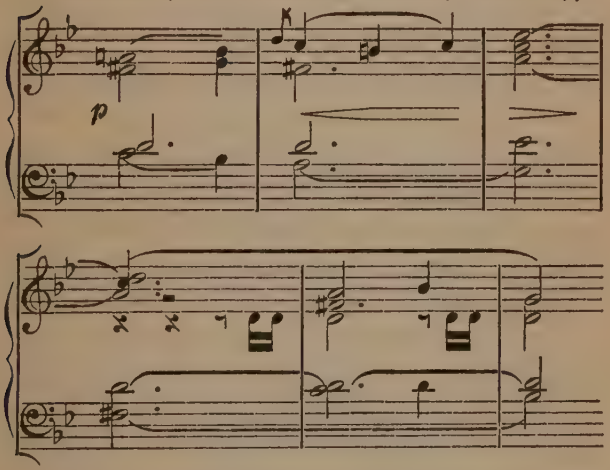
Bass doubled below.

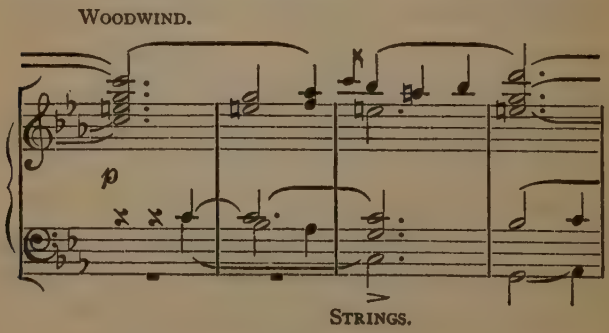
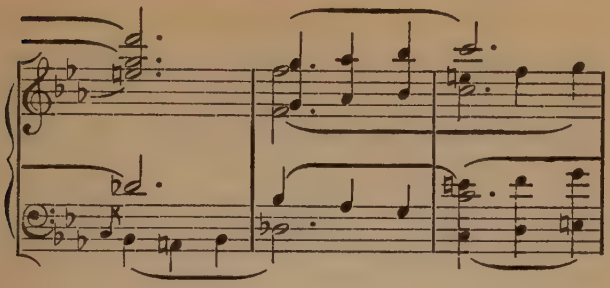
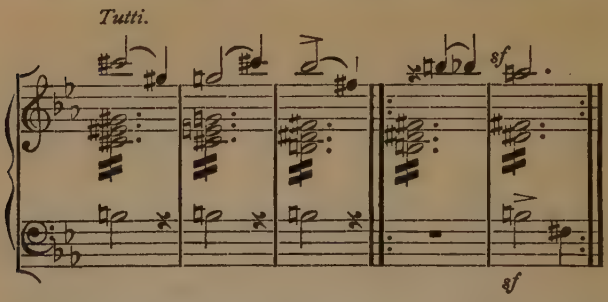
all carried along with that logic of sequence and narrative that makes all seem equally worth quoting. Almost the essence of the movement is contained in the rhythm which appears everywhere, especially in horns and basses:

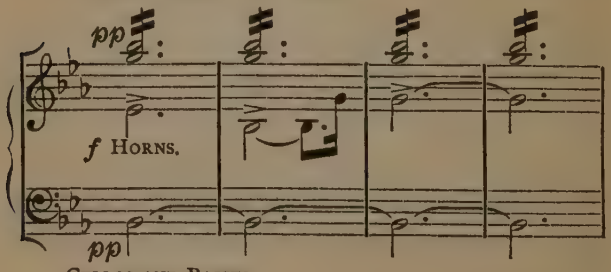


Now the subject enters again with wonderful depth of device, as the oboes, clarionets, and fagots are singing the melody a whole beat behind flutes, brass, and violins, and yet, instead

of conflict, there is but a richer magnificence. The feeling of depth of unconscious design is growing upon us, in step with the symbolic music. Again comes the fluent phrase, which helps to a cadence, simmering down to the quiet lyric feeling of the second melody, mostly in woodwind, with but faintest reminders of more solemn background.

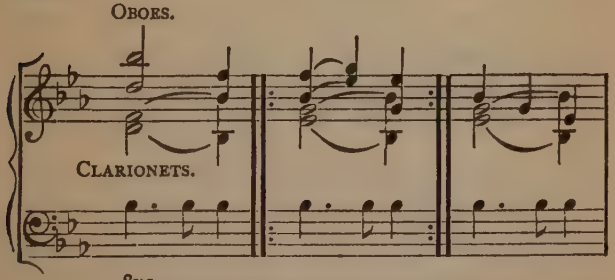
WOODWIND (with the low strings sustaining the harmony).

Then it swings with bolder plaint out into the major, but quickly returns to the stern theme of the beginning. There is a very similar relation of objective and subjective, of fate and

victim, to the first Allegro of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, though we have no thought of a similar extension of such an idea. But the repeated prayer of the second and the stern progress of the first melody suggest the analogy for the moment. But right here there is a sudden glad complexion of the main figure, that spoils the continuing symbol, while it enhances the charm of the poem. From the high-spirited burst—on through a phrase which sustains the feeling in more meditative vein. Then suddenly back to stern business, with the rapid run, with relentless power, in *fff*, interrupted anon with curious, delicate cogitations on the echoed phrase. Now follows the second melody with a new profundity. For, as it sings on high in woodwind, out of the depths

rises an interrupting echo, both voices chanting independently. They grow, mutually reinforcing, losing the plaint, to a climax of power, in which is blended the vigor of the rapid phrase. When the first subject reappears in the basses, it comes no longer in terrible interruption, but rather by natural expectation. The element of passive subject is not lost; but by the courage of companionship he has gradually nerved himself to meet the nearing fate. We must not commit ourselves to one image. All are shifts to utter the general mood. Here there is a new spring. If forced to a single phrase, I should say the whole had the feeling of some Stern High Festival,—big with deep omen, but still festive. Hear this solemn echo *de profundis*:

Throughout there is this feeling of High Festival with solemn undertone, where the bass is constantly speaking, and finally breaks out into the subject, joined later by the whole chorus. The second melody now sounds more human than ever in the contrast, with slight change of higher swing. Soon reflection appears in the dual discussing voices; and now, after a climax (where, before, the subject



sounded powerfully) is the "best" again. In surprise of harmony, trembling in high strings and wood, in softest tones, sings, down in sacred horns, not the melody itself, but its essence in simple, drawn-out sounds.

It is the very spirit and voice of ancient legend sounding through the hallowed woodland,—in the whole passage, where the horns, at last rising to a high note, gradually sink, dim meditation hovering about, down and away into unseen depths, as suddenly the clarion woodwind ring out irregular, conflicting cries through the forest:



Cellos (doubled below in the Basses).

Then higher uncertain calls are answered below in united horns and lower wood; later is the simple cry of this legend-spirit, twice re-echoed from highest woodwind to lowest brass.

The echoes continue on broader phrase to highest possible grandeur, emerging in the beginning melody, itself the echoing phrase, in fullest, loudest union of all. For some time the original verse is rehearsed. In its midst is a gloomy, uneasy dying away of broken phrases in the wood. Out of it anon come cries from the pleading melody. It might be the *Loreley* witch and her victim caught in the forest:

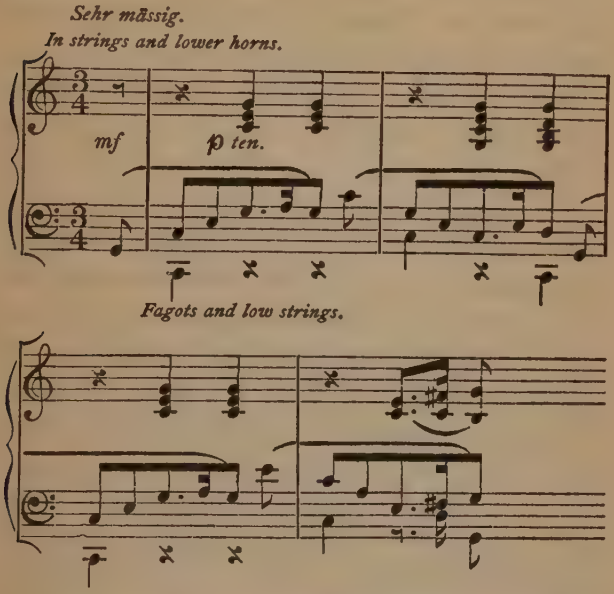
"Kommst nimmermehr aus diesem Wald."

But presently sounds again the firm note of main theme. And now all is in gladder strain. There is a new glow of epic joy, with a crowning burst at the end. It is the clearest epitome of Teutonic legendary poetry.

Scherzo. Sehr Mässig.

We are surer than ever that we have caught the spirit, when we come to the second movement,—the only one in which Schumann has descended from his sacred German to a foreign word. That shows its importance; and so there is no doubt of the humor. I should call it an heroic ballad with humorous edge. The national color is here of the sharpest. To one

who has not known and felt the German ballad of the Rhine, it may be somewhat of a riddle. But then it is all the clearer from its very limitations :



You can almost see the words under the score, beginning, say :

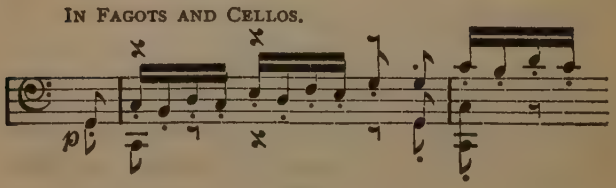
"Im hohen Burgverliess,"

and so spinning along to the drive of the song. But it must be a sombre old ballad ; of dread

danger, and some impossible happenings, not without a grim sort of ancient humor. We think of such tales as of the old robber knight with seven sons on the scaffold; how his last request of the Emperor to spare his sons was answered in cruel jest: that he should be saved whom the father's headless trunk should approach; and how the condition was fulfilled with all seven.

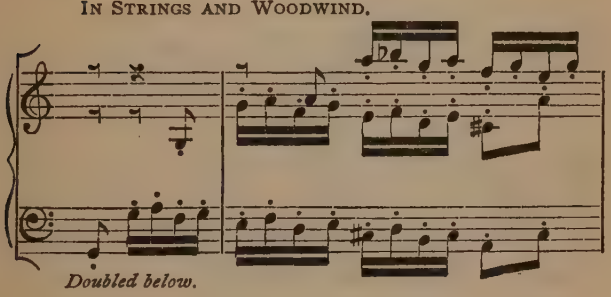
Of course, there is no absolute need of all this interpretation. In any case, there is no mistaking the sprightly beauty and poetic treatment. But there is surely much added charm in the knowledge of the special association in the composer's mind.

The melody is finely varied in other verses, and returns with telling climax to the original one. Then comes a more puzzling canto of our ballad. A curious theme, made for musing mystery:



begins in basses and threads its mystic and complex way through the varying voices. It is not simply that the poet's thinking-cap is on, after the lyric burst. It is a wandering strain of ancient prehistoric things,—" eine alte Rune," —tracing its fateful paths in the dim world of gods and men, in the days when fate hung heavy o'er both races. It is not the pondering on these things. For this is a ballad. It is the things themselves.

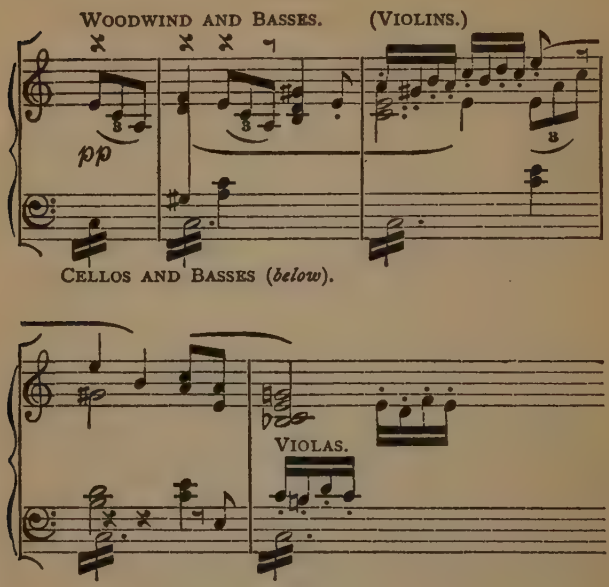
The dark phrase winds on its destined course:



and now merges into the heroic strain, where, however, it still holds equal sway.

In the third canto is a new element,—the human, personal, the purely lyric. But anon the ancient saying sends a warning reminder,

and the glamour of legend is not lost. It is all poetic in the highest degree:



It sings in a more modern vein.

Now the first verse returns in a brighter key, with more brilliant resonance. Then it sinks into the mood of the third phase, and emerges once again as at the beginning. Towards the end are quaint, primitive refrains of the beginning of the first melody, with its answer, a

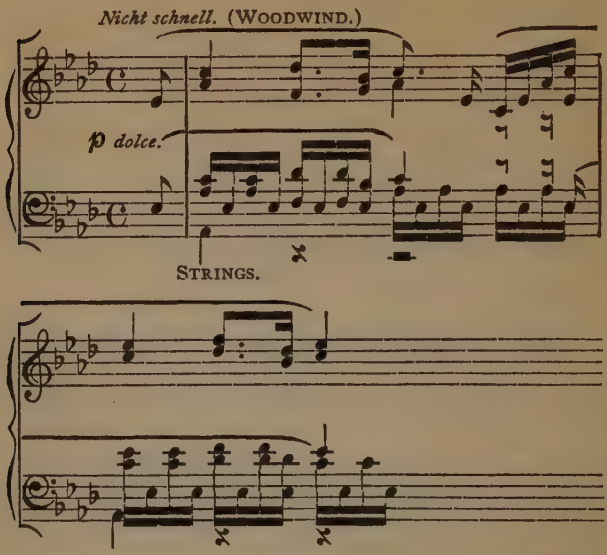
kind of "Yes, yes," again and again, and suggestions of the third. The ominous second strain has vanished, for good, indeed.

In its absolute isolation from the rest of the symphony the Scherzo is all the greater. Free from attempts at connected meaning by reminiscent theme, it is really all the more relevant to the general plan.

In the third division the air of legends has gone. Its very absence here proves their reality before, and acquits us of rhapsody. Clearly, the scope of the symphony broadens. It might, so far, have been all in the realm of the myth. Here we are in the clear sunlight of idyllic human feeling. And it is absolutely German to the core. So, probing for bearings, we think perhaps of a "German Symphony," like the "Scotch" of Mendelssohn. Nor would this be far wrong. But Schumann's has a higher and profounder national significance.

The Andante melody here—*Nicht schnell*—is pure German folk-song. There is a placid rest from earlier mysticism.

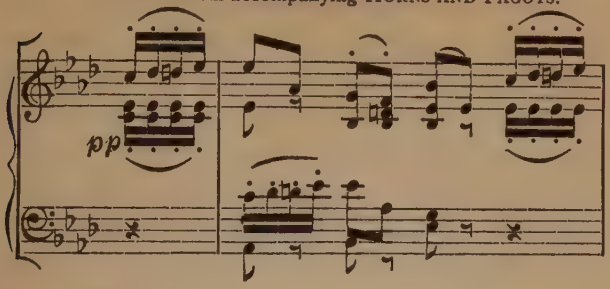
As national song it reminds us of Schubert. But it has that special vein the Germans call



"innig," which was Schumann's own, although it in nowise touched his leaning towards musing thought. And here, too, is contrast with the earlier symphony. There was nothing "innig" about primitive legends.

Like most Andantes, this is of lyric simplicity. No profound depths are stirred, as in the first movement; and no bold heights are gained. The first melody is merely followed in and out by another of equal simplicity, with hardly a change of tonal color:

STRINGS with accompanying HORNS AND FAGOTS.



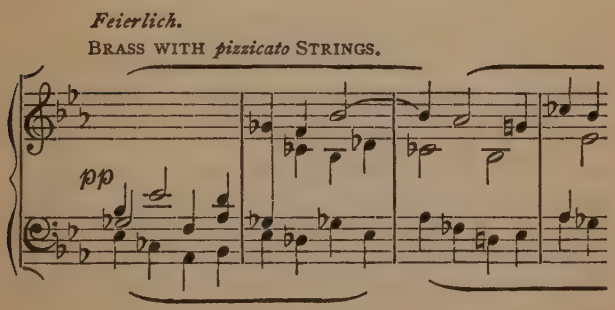
In the middle they both sing together, and a new answer leads into a phase of gentle, intimate discourse, of which this new strain, a simple, descending figure, is the principal subject, with many digressions and lesser topics. The second melody, too, is evident throughout, so that, at the end of the talk, the first one returns with a new freshness. The end has some of the friendly touches of the former, and of the dialogue. It is all clearly a ray of earthly sunlight before entering the cathedral, in the fourth division.

The second slow movement is marked "*Feierlich.*" If our object be to prove the existence of a meaning, we need say little. The very direction—"solemnly,"—a single glance at

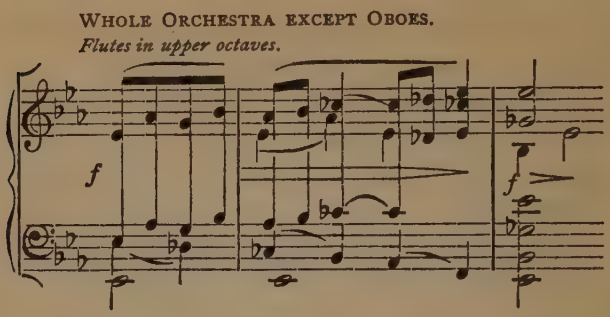
the score, show the intent most plainly. And see at the outset the utter contrast of the solemnity at the beginning of the symphony and here, though, in both, expressed by the brass. For there it was the quality of Waldhorn, sacred to the religion which lurks in the forest from earliest Teuton ages. Here the brass is the stern dogma, the overwhelming power of cathedral organ, where the visible architecture is mirrored in the massive polyphony. We remember Schelling's definition of architecture: frozen music. Not only is there solemnity of feeling in both these movements, but in both it is religious. Yet could there be a greater actual contrast? Again we must bow before this power of music to make us feel the strength and quality of these influences. And the fortunate tone-poet can simply give forth directly their essence, without the words which, in sacred things, might offend others, or rouse the prejudice of bigotry. Not only is he safer in music, but much more powerful. And so he can actually show through his tone-poetry the soundness that still lingers of the old religion, and the stern truth of the new.

To be just, however, there is undoubtedly in

this episode of Schumann's symphony rather a picture of mediæval German church spirit than a direct utterance of personal religion, like Bach's Passion music. There is clearly a sense of the picturesque; and the greater stress is perhaps upon nationality. There are local and temporal limitations in the religious poem. There is, throughout, the constant sense of dogma; no personal melody; all fitting in a perfect system of priest-lore; the main theme discoverable being a short fugal one, beginning in trom-



bones in awful minor. At the end of a sentence all join in a loud assenting phrase, which is surely nothing but the quickened theme; it suggests an overwhelming Amen from the multitude in the body of the church, eagerly



responding to the liturgy of chancel and choir. Then the doctrinal structure really begins with its colossal, dazzling, massive net-work. If it is puzzling on the score to the lingering glance (which is the wrong attitude), what must it be in transient sound. And there is no end,—no gentle cadence of secular tune,—on and on voices enter, breaking in one upon the other, make an eternal progress. These curious changes of movement, all with the same theme: first, in simple, march-like rhythm, suddenly twice as fast a motion, but with great, heavy, three-paced swing; and, finally, with the same rate, but in even movement again,—what are they? Different doctrines about the same central truth? Or varying attitudes of worship? But there is always one central, single idea.

We cannot, however, ignore the constant gain in intensity, together with actual speed, of a certain eagerness, betrayed in strings trembling in the theme, with sustaining horns; more and more a personal reality of feeling,—and then, suddenly, before the end, a breaking off of the fateful progress, and a human cry in united burst in new key or color of tone; then back to the former march, and again the interrupting burst. Strangely, the end is not in massive architectural climax. Rather, the last human cry has prevailed to soften the former rigor, and the first phrase has a certain simplicity and sincerity of Lutheran *chorale*, with much diminished conflict of voices, with hymn-like cadence.

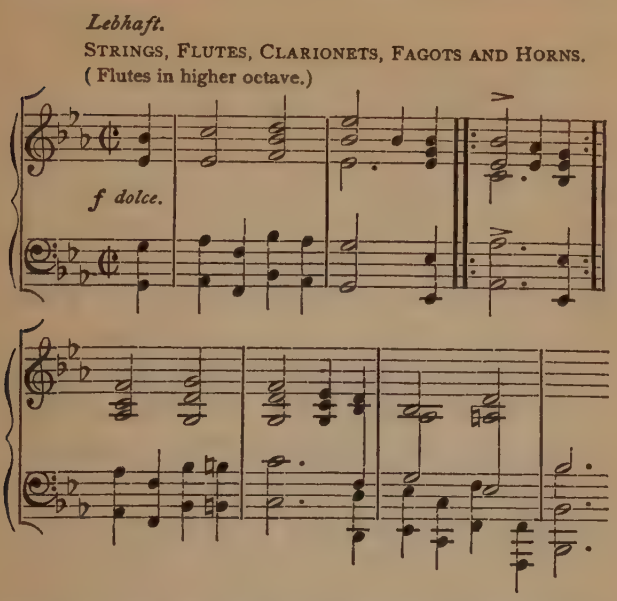
Finale.

There is ever the danger for writer and reader to forget the true weight of interpreting phrases and figures; that there is no translation of fixed subject; that the real content is the general spirit perceived by simple enjoyment of the beauty of the art-work. With this in mind, we have really much more freedom; we are reminded of this and of that; many things are suggested. But none of them are really essen-

tial. Where they are thought of by the composer; where they are mentioned by him or even set down as governing subject, there is the best reason for holding still to the same view that they are not absolutely needful to the right perception. And yet, for the purpose of suggesting the beauty, the sentient meaning, they may be of the highest use. Once having entered on the essay of telling in words of the value of a work of art, we are hopelessly cramped if we are restricted to the mere setting forth of technical structure. Therefore, our figures are indispensable for suggestion; for literal interpretation they are worthless.

It is well to think of this once more in this fifth and last division of our Symphony,—mainly because of the great danger of definite and final association, to which we are lured by the fine relevance of this movement with the first four. Having given fair warning, we shall not fear to deck our impressions freely with suggested figures.

At the very beginning, with this strong, simple, virile song, with eminent brass, and free, rolling bass, there is one German word that ever recurs, to which we can find no English equiv-

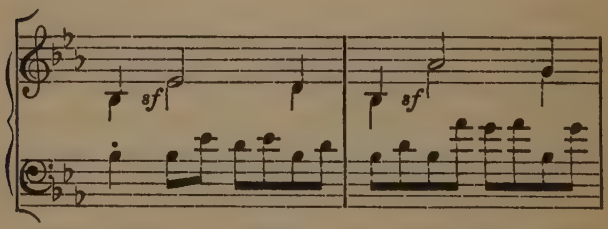


alent, which we can only describe,—*burschikos*. It is the spirit of German university life. As it is a "Rhine" symphony, by the master's admission, as he did celebrate the old minster at Cologne, we are probably near to his own conscious idea with our word. In such a symphony, teeming with the typical ideal life of the German, this element, of the university spirit, would hardly be absent. At any rate, its main qualities are here, the stirring, soaring

spirit, fearless of the cynical world, firm with manly tread, and the rough humor, too; they are all here.

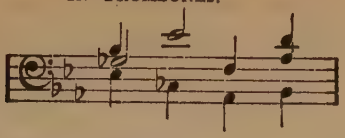
But this is not all. And it is not all so simple of content. Nor is it necessary to restrict our suggestion to the academic life, properly. It is a larger view of the bustling doings and thought of the old German Rhine city, sacred to higher interests and ideals.

The choral song is for a while simple in its course, and needs no study but the hearing. But at the end of its full refrain emerge the four horns with more than casual theme, while the violas are supporting in their own livelier way:



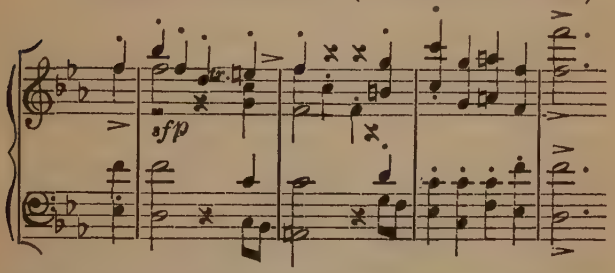
The rest all take it up, not exactly fugally, though it savors strongly of the cloister. Surely it is a reminder of the solemn old cathedral phrase:

IN TROMBONES.



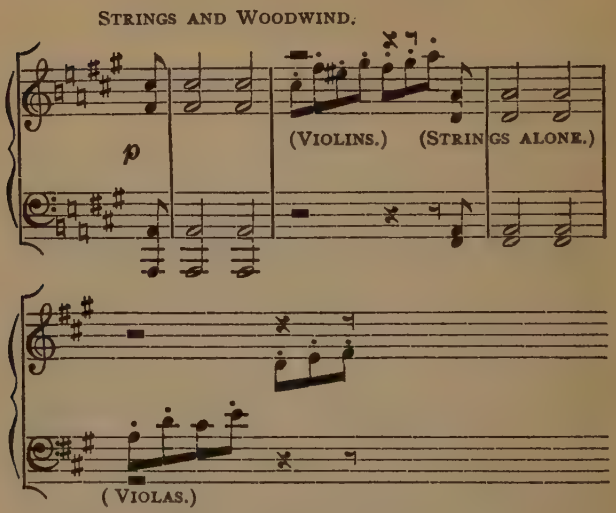
but much faster. Then as answer comes the pert humor of this phrase:

STRINGS AND WOODWIND. (Doubled above in Flutes.)



treated with the same fugal suggestiveness; ending with a good, honest blare from the horns. Now we are back in the march spirit of the beginning. And here is a longer extension of an earlier episode of quieter feeling, which did not seem important before. It certainly takes away from the masculine harshness of the rest, or heightens it as foil. From its close succeeds a fine antiphonal shout of chords, as all the wind responds to wood and strings. Suddenly this is tempered to hushed minor

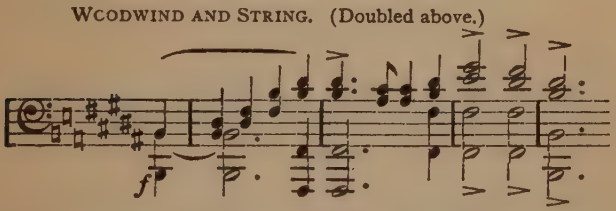
chords; in their midst we hear something like the old cathedral theme, in its lighter phase:



Then the comic theme struts in again, here and there, high in piping wood, while our last quoted, more serious motive is singing low in alternating strings.

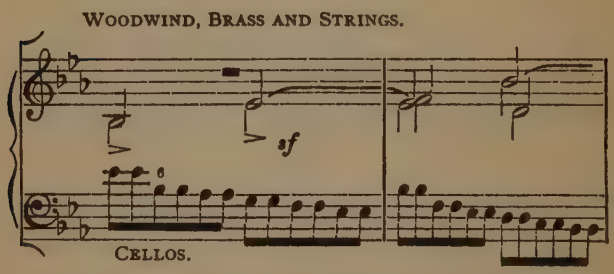
No apology is needed for seeing here the master touch of quaint, mediæval, scholasticism, with comic hue,—below the pious priest, above the flippant *studiosus*,—much like the famous scene of the monk in Schiller's "Wal-

lenstein's Camp." Alas! as soon as the word is said, it seems too much. The humor is not expressed, of course. Perhaps Schumann did not ever dare to think it to himself. But it was there, the more truly, in a less conscious stage. Comic may be too strong for sprightly. There is certainly the quaint neighborhood of the monastic and of the secular, and the latter seems to predominate, finally ending the episode in a melodious blast in the brass of true, honest German feeling:



Added to all these themes, really the sinew of the whole, is a certain constant movement from the quieter middle of the first song, which softens the saucy wit of the one, and the serious tone of the other, and gives to the whole a friendly kind of sincerity, which is specially caught and summed in the (last quoted) strain of the horns,—more than ever at the last time, from full heart and lungs.

And so straight on into the first chorus, with the same vehement sincerity, with its succeeding joyful and friendly phrases. The brass have more and more to do. Sometimes they are given free room to themselves alone,—answered by strident strings. When we seem to see the end, they all stop for the last verse, which begins with the starting of a heavier and more vehement pace in low strings, in stern fugue led off by fagots and two horns, followed at proper intervals by other groups, all in the old theme:



In they come, four groups and more, until we can no longer see or hear them distinct. Just as we lose the sense of bearings in the architectural mass, they join into a closer body, and soon are shouting united a last acclaim, all in a great hymn, which is neither religious nor

secular. Too broad for either, it includes them both.

So in this German Symphony of the Rhine seem to merge all the inspiring influences of the nation. But it does not need its title. It speaks not of localities, rather of memories and of aspirations, which, though they may have special association, belong to us all.

XI

MENDELSSOHN

The critic cannot always be optimist and eulogist. The kind of catholicity is not good that tries to accept, to approve everything. The truth is that, whether we will or no, we cannot say our honest say without some implied disparagement. If it is impossible to admire without exaggeration, it is easy to blame by mere silence. Our vehement praise of one is often the severest word against another. If we were treating of music in general, our praise of Mendelssohn would be unbounded. If he had written no symphonies, we should not, in omitting, ignore him. But in our special field, there is danger that by faint praise we may do some damning. The very high place we are guarding for the symphony, holds us to an honest telling of our impression. After all, what the man may lose, the art must gain.

Mendelssohn was all but master in the highest sense. It may be unwise to make shelves

of lesser and greater poets; it certainly is to try a rigid ranking. But we must be clear in mind about the word we are often using, that implies such a mastery of the art medium, that artisanship is merged in clear poetry, where we can no longer see the lines of conscious toil. This is, indeed, most rare. Then there are lesser and greater forms. There may be writers of most expressive songs. Others may have the power over profound architecture of simultaneous voices. But this must be quickly seen. Those works wherein the whole structure is of another art, not created by the musician, cannot test and prove the true master like those which, absolute, independent in tones alone, evolve with inner power a perfect structure all their own. Thus a writer merely of greatest song, of oratorio, or of opera, has not measured his power in the pure tonal art, which is most difficult because of the very absence of words. Here the very perfection of form, rounded by a certain unconscious process of crystallization, attests its truth and greatness.

A common mistake as to this special power, this question of form, must not be passed over, Strange to say, it is a mistake found as often

with good musicians as with laymen, perhaps oftener. A very respectable composer of national note once gave the author his recipe, which was: Get your themes and fit them in the established moulds. In other words, be original about your melodic subjects, and, in harmonic treatment, too, be your sincere self; but in form follow the strict directions of tradition. There are no other forms in the music world than these sacred ones: the sonata, rondo, dance, and song; and, of course, there never will be.

It is most strange this, because it betrays utter lack of the very idea of composition. So there is this constant, almost hopeless confusion of *form*, the abstract quality, and special, concrete *forms* and moulds. Just so, by exact parallel, is the confusion of *thought*, the process, with special *thoughts*, so that the scholar, who has never wondered beyond his precise, literal logic, can see none of this highest of man's process, unless it be uttered in the verbal language of makeshift. It is, this, the main cause for the low conception of music. What does it mean? he says. You cannot tell me precisely in words; therefore it means nothing.

He does not see that all that his literal language does is to suggest by the shifts of a limited lot of conventions, by vain labels aimed at high ideas, by combining these in rough images, the inner thought that is sorely struggling for true utterance. He cannot see, or he surely will not, that this very utterance is far clearer, more joyous in the language, not of conventional shifts, but of pure tonal beauty. Finally, he has never reflected that in his logic, sacred to the language of prose, the true essence and secret power is the sequence; that this sequence may be where the terms and premises are other than verbal; indeed, that there can be no greater scope for this sequence of man's highest thought than in melodies, their contrast, the depth and complexity of their combination, and in the complete cycle of their roaming career within a tonal poem.

To return to the former question, we find such a mistake, not of the layman, but of the respected musician. Originality he praises in theme and in the agreement of simultaneous tones. But this quality of all, which is the final test of the master, he makes a mere matter of school-boy's cramming. So we can never

remember too often that the quality of spontaneous utterance in form true to the subject, is utterly distinct from memorized schedules. Indeed, it is hostile in this sense, that every true composition must vary somewhat from the outline of any earlier work for its own individuality. A man had far better take prosaic themes and let them flow by their own vital motion to an organic whole, than lay new melodies, however beautiful, in the dead mould of older works. So many evils spring from this that great stress must here be allowed. For men will either insist on the rigid, fatal formalism, or, revolting, will welcome all abandon of complete structure.

The true reason, I suppose, lies in the difficulty of perception. And it is not very different in architecture. Just as this quality is the highest to conceive, so it is hardest to perceive. In the "frozen music," a child may admire, in a cathedral, the embossing of outer doors, or the beauty of interior detail; a youth will catch the bold leap of the tower; a man will feel the massive dignity of vaulted aisle. But he must be almost a builder himself who will prove the completeness of rounded whole. Now in music it is actually still more difficult.

For the cathedral is ever before us. But in the symphony, the first tones have vanished; enchanted with the present, we forget the past; and how shall we ever conjure it all together to feel the test of perfect sequence and relevance? Still, hard or easy, we cannot lose sight of this greatest of elements. And, indeed, it may not be so bad a problem. We are apt to proceed too much on the need of conscious study. We forget that the greatest enjoyment is most unstudied. The truth is here almost a paradox. The more the hearer knows, the more he has a basis of earlier study, the more careless may be his enjoyment. The beauty of melody, the fitness of contrasting subjects, the cycle of rounded path he will feel without the need of more consciousness than the creating master. But let there be no false notion of the ignorant. High art requires mind to enjoy as well as to create. Once for all, would there were an end to those nauseous phrases of the Philistine, proud of his ignorance, that he does not understand music, but knows what he likes. It must not be thought that there is something inherent in the natural man more than in the natural animal, whereby he may

catch great thoughts without thinking. It would be a very false gospel to preach that great music is very easy to see by a certain trick. The masterpieces of music must be approached in far humbler spirit. It is all part of the original purpose of the art, whether of entertainment or of highest moral message. If it is the former, it were an unworthy kind of materialism to spend so much time in mere preparation for an amusement. So, again, this talk of the Philistine about the lack of meaning in music, this easy judgment of the blissful ignorant on what they like, is all irrelevant. They do not know because they have not looked. If they were not so serious, they would remind us of the famous Sam Weller, who did not see his father in court when looking straight at the ceiling.

Mendelssohn is the very type to test this mastery. He seemed to have all the qualities, if any one ever did. And, indeed, many of them, of all but highest value, are sadly out of vogue in modern days, such as the much neglected elements of absolute clearness, and of thoroughgoing refinement in detail and in spirit. He is charged with lack of depth and

of intensity of feeling. In reality, he was most sincere in his very freedom from that pseudo-passion that seeks, in its false whirl, to throw a cloud of dust, covering great, primal faults.

Mendelssohn was most lucid in many-voiced building and strong in massive treatment; his power over the palette of orchestral colors was bred in his very fibre. With all these, which led to success in other paths, he lacked in personal quality to employ them in their highest use. In his wonderful expression of local color and his objective depiction, he was more affected by an outward stimulus than by his own subjective feeling. Mendelssohn made no advance in the outline of the symphony over Haydn. It is, therefore, significant that, correspondingly, he shows no inherent strength in his symphonic feeling or ideas. On the contrary, he was driven to find emotional content in historic sentiment or in scenic description. These subjects belong more properly to the lesser overture, and here Mendelssohn was in the first rank.

It is under the head of form that, it seems, Mendelssohn falls short of the measure of master. And here he serves wonderfully to illustrate the great virtue of the symphony. If we could

use another word, we should be glad,—one less coldly technical. After all, it is exactly the same quality we have been searching for in each succeeding master, that of live continuity, of agreement of all regions of the work in the common purpose. There is nothing mysterious about it; nor is it the trick of handicraft. It is all a matter of sincerity, intensity of purpose. If a child has a message to give, and he is absorbed in its truth and value, he will say it without faltering to many people. The halting will come when the natural impulse of communication is weakened. The principle is exactly the same as to the clear, continuous homogeneity of a work of art. In the master symphonies the motive purpose was strong enough to sustain a clear thread and plan throughout.

The real trouble is not the lack of form, but the want of feeling, of the content of the message. The outward incoherence is merely the sign of original weakness. None of the elements of the art of music are so keen a test of sincerity of the prompting feeling as that of harmony of outline. It is, in the spontaneous sense, the true justification of the whole,—like

the final answer in algebra, which verifies the proposition.

It will, of course, be said: How may this spontaneous perfection be distinguished from the mere imitation of old exemplars? It is much the same question as in other imitations, of greater or lesser art, from poetry to lace. Sometimes the earmark of the false is the very strictness of its adherence to the true. Thus, when we said above that Schumann's *Noveletten* were, perhaps, his greatest work, it was from this very conviction of the powerful coherence of the various episodes in a plan of radical novelty.

Finally, in a symphony, in the very highest meaning, our quality of form does not relate so much to the completeness of the several movements, as to their mutual relation in the whole. It is something like the old truth, that two halves do not make a whole, that of four perfect symphony movements the whole may be actually less than each of the parts, in poetic value.

There is, then, no technical lack nor want of detailed beauty that we find in Mendelssohn. The greatest charge we can bring against him is that his symphonies do not fulfil our highest idea of the form. Even so, there is no denying

their enchanting beauty; the sincerity of their clearness, thoroughness, self-restraint; the high purity of their tone; the poetic charm and brilliance of treatment. We must merely withhold that highest of all qualities, a strong, pervading, uniting, subjective feeling.

In other ways Mendelssohn showed that he had not that intensity of personal feeling which expresses itself in highest form, breaking, in the hands of later masters, the fetters of the earlier, and extending their limits. Rather he genially reflected other poetic conceptions, as in his rare music for the Midsummer Night's Dream.

But, on the other hand, Mendelssohn was sincere in his very moderation. He had none of the false prophet, who works himself into a conscious state of false passion. In his balance of fine mean, he differs strikingly from most of the masters we have treated. He had not the profound sympathy of Beethoven; but he had more than Schubert. The quality which is somewhat opposed, that of light fancy, where imagination runs away with personal feeling, he shared with Schubert not unequally. But he had not the bold scope of Schubert's mind. He was rather the orthodox musician of his

century, setting its sacred dramas and services, celebrating picturesque scenes and striking history. But the writing of oratorios in the great sense had been accomplished in the previous century. Here he was, after all, a follower. He was original, individual, chiefly in his special extension of Programme Music. We have seen Schumann's attitude. Mendelssohn's was poetic in the highest degree. But it was not of sufficient dignity for the great forms of pure instrumental music. It fitted better the looser overture. Therefore it seems that his greatest works are his scenes from the Midsummer Night's Dream and his striking overtures with scenic and historic titles. Mendelssohn had little touch with the great stirring spiritual and intellectual discoveries of his time. He did not utter and represent them as did Beethoven and Schubert in their age, and Schumann in a lesser, national way in his. But, then, neither did Mendelssohn represent certain downward tendencies.

The symphony must demand, once for all, the subjective vein. This does not say that there may not be a special title, implied or expressed. But the treatment is of the inner, individual view, not the mere outward depiction.

Here the Scotch Symphony falls short. Its only continuous purpose is the Scotch character of the melodies. This is a purely external unity; it does not affect the personal conception of the poet. However exquisitely beautiful and tempting with its rich depth and brilliant complexity, we must not invite the reader to a hopeless search for such an inner meaning as the symphony, in our view, must have. But the Italian Symphony here stands distinct. Evidently the intent here was not the outward, national likeness of tunes. There must have been a certain Teutonic subjective conception in the musician's mind, which pervades most of the work. It has the true plan, if not the complete fulfilment. It was not a mere reflection of Italian skies. It is rather the inner picture which every German poet has of the ideal land of beauty and art. Mendelssohn has certainly suggested this.

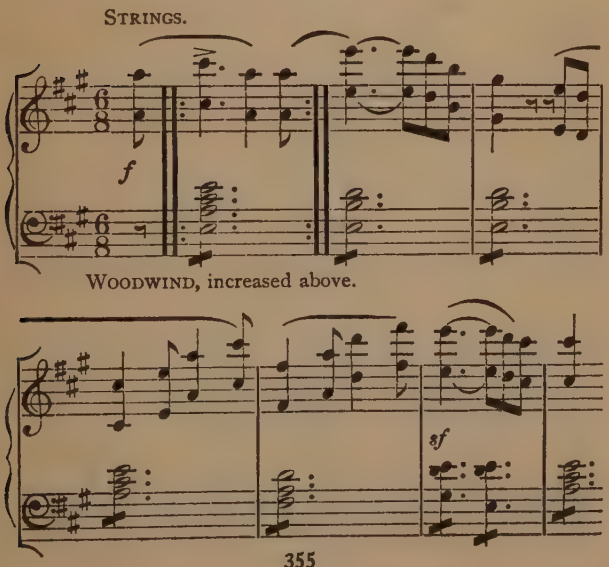
Italian Symphony (*No. 4*).

The name "Italian," unlike many musical titles, was constantly used by the composer. The work is a direct expression of that enchantment for the ideal land of beauty, joy, and art

which has held Germans captive from the earliest invasions of Goths, through the attempts at conquest of a Barbarossa, to the poetry of a Goethe.

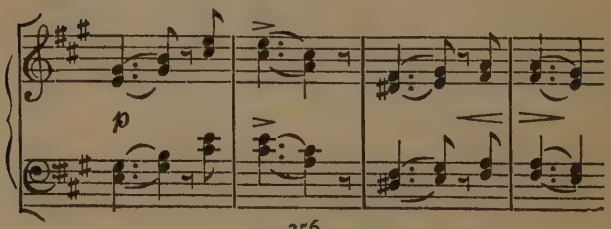
Exactly opposed to the "Scotch," there is no actual trace of Italian nationalism in the music. It is German, a pure German expression of delight. So the symphony is not graphic or picturesque; it is a highly poetical utterance of the German idea of Italy.

The first theme, in *Allegro Vivace*, gives the



stamp of simple joyousness to the whole movement. It strikes the leading note, which is reflected in various lesser melodies. The texture of the whole is wonderfully close. It is impossible to trace outwardly the subtle similarity and relation of melodies. The first builds in the very beginning a stirring climax on its own theme, resounding at last vigorously in the basses. Throughout, there is the element of airiest lightness. This is first suggested by a fluent phrase at the close of the main melody. By deft turns and by the trick of sequence it evolves ever new phrases, hardly like the first save in the merry pace. It gives the whole movement a wonderful freshness. Ever it bubbles forth in a new guise. You cannot mistake its hidden personality. The second melody, which continues the spirit of the first, is sacred to the woodwind,

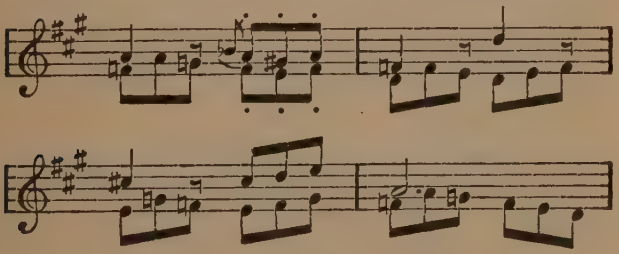
CLARIONETS AND FAGOTS.



though the strings are lightly dancing about playfully.

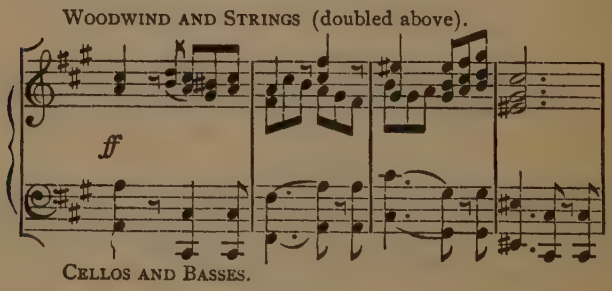
The melody extends into purest song, quite merging the dance at times. Faintly a solo clarionet calls from the distance, and presently the merry chorus of the first theme are all about, quite drowning with their festive bustle the more delicate note of the second.

The best of it is the sparkling discussion after this presenting of themes has been repeated. It begins with a restless phrase which has threaded its way, we cannot tell how, from its source in the cadence of the first melody. But it is too volatile, too incessant in its shallow chatter to take the lead; so it soon subsides into mere companionship with a theme of greater dignity and distinction, which now enters. Again we feel its kinship to the others, and its fitness in the whole; but we cannot trace it outwardly:



Around it develops, in the strings alone, an episode purely fugal, yet without the least odor of the lamp, nay, with all the fragrance of the wood, full of the truest poetry. The minor gives it a touch of sombre romance. From the almost prosaic hilarity of the beginning we have plunged into the land of strange legends, into dim mystery of history that merges into myth. Into the midst the first theme bursts, first in the wood, then in the brass, alternating; still the fugal play continuing, yet all so spontaneous, fresh, and smooth that you do not think of counterpoint unless you look at the score. It is, indeed, that highest art, which makes least show of means and of difficulties, concealing them beneath the wealth of feeling.

This stage of the two themes is of highest interest, as it is fought now with successive



assertion of one and the other, now with equal insistence of both at the same time.

They are so different in humor: the fugal, full of dark romance, the first melody mere holiday gladness.

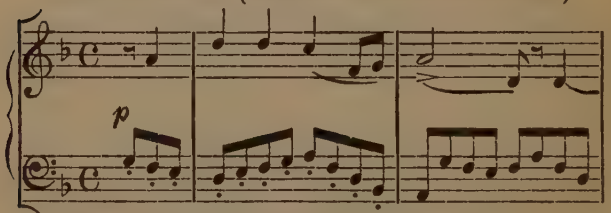
Strange to say, the official second theme has no part in the discussion. But later, when, after a lull, the original order of tunes re-enters, the second appears in a new way, sung as duet of cellos above violas. But even here the darker-hued fugal theme intrudes its humor, first lightly in the minor. But as it grows more vehement, it is squarely attacked by the first melody in the original key. After a struggle of a few bars, the latter triumphs, and holds its cheery sway to the end.

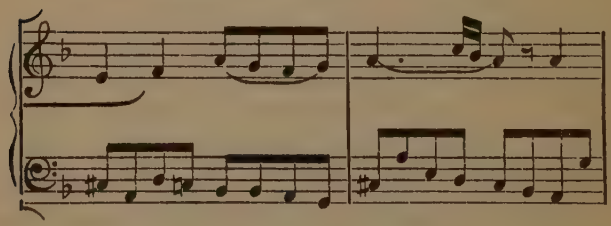
The melody of the second movement is a perfect lyric embodiment of a phase of Italian poetry as it appears to the German mind. Burdened with a wealth of legendary feeling, it belongs to a rare type which is indefinable; in folk-song it is sometimes a setting of a strange ballad of foreign land. We remember that other type we found common in Beethoven and Schubert, in the Seventh and in the C Major,

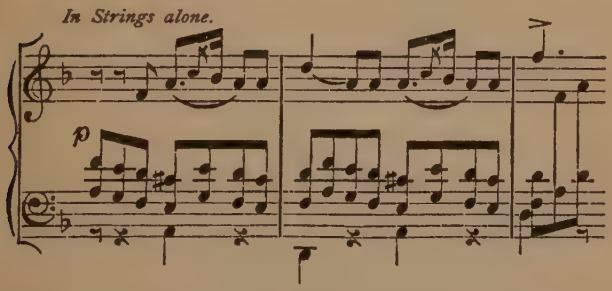
and we wonder at the idea of thus arraying all great melodies. I believe you would find the melody of mystic, almost philosophic search; another class of dim legend or ballad as here; another of intimate, friendly confidence. We might try to analyze what makes this legendary sound, but we prefer intuition to hard proof.

Andante con moto.

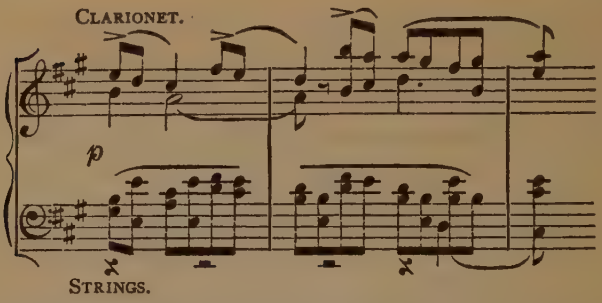
FAGOTS AND VIOLAS (doubled an octave above in Oboes).



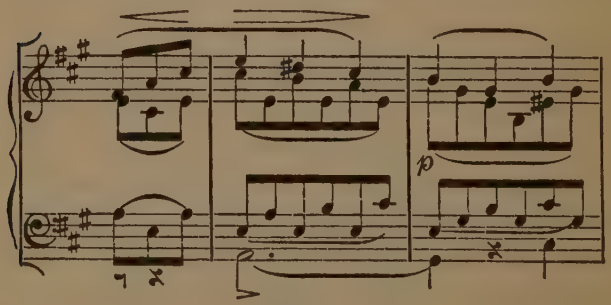
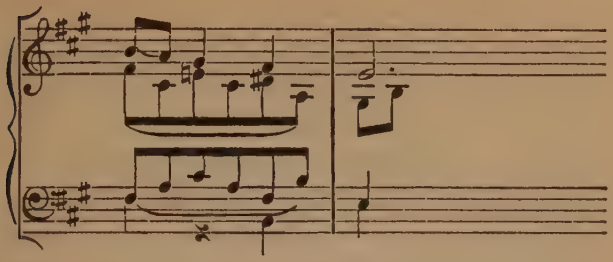
CELLOS (doubled an octave below in Basses).

Much of the charm lies in the stately movement of strings, while the song proceeds above in the wood. Later, the violins take up the theme, and the flutes join the *obligato*, somehow

picking out a shadowy counter-melody in the movement. Indeed, it is all melody, like the simple verses of a ballad, telling its sad story, without reflection or overflowing emotion. So the next verse is mysteriously told by strings alone, in the minor, the violins singing the story to the fateful, ever present accompaniment of the lower strings:

There is a queer bit of humor at the end,—pure Mephistophelian. He must have sold his soul. Immediately follows a touching strain, all in human major,—a new melody in the clarionets.

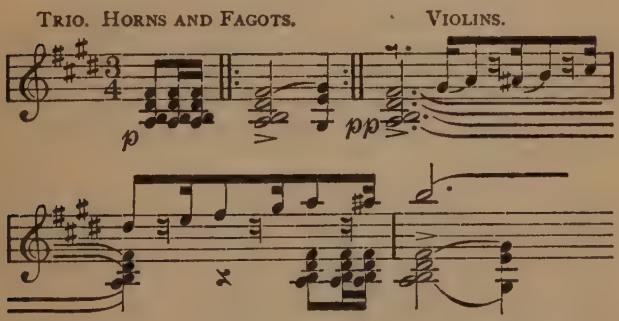
As it flows along in more and more intimate vein, it is rudely stopped by minor strokes which herald the original ballad, though not in regular verse,—mere vague memories. Once more the human strain enters with all the contrast of



sharpest colors. The whole ends in the full atmosphere of legendary mystery.

The *Scherzo* is bucolic and playful, with idyllic humor. But the relevance is not clear. There is, to German ears, unmistakably something of their own folk-song in the melody, and this more specially because the cadence is that of a well-known *Volkslied.* Indeed, the Scherzo seems a mere setting for the gem, the



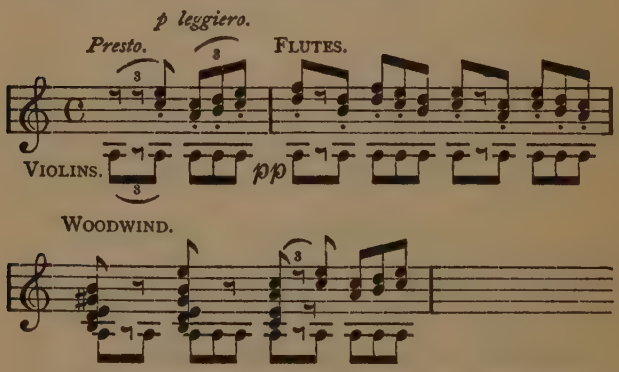
Trio, with its intensely romantic melody, for horns and bassoons. It supplies all that we crave in the placid simplicity, almost plainness of the former. And as if to convince us that the Scherzo is but foil to the Trio, the latter pervades the close of the movement.



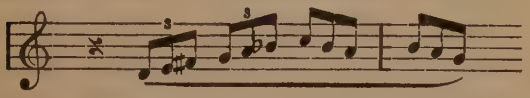
But of the whole it must be admitted that its place in the general plan is not clear. It does not seem to have a value of its own, proportioned to each of the other movements.

The *Saltarello* is conceived in that special vein of Mendelssohn's, of lightest fancy and rhythm, so different from the humor of Beethoven. Mendelssohn's dance seems that of an imaginary race, which knows of nothing but joyousness; Beethoven's is of human beings.

Illustrations and examples are dangerous, tying the listener to accidental association. Yet the temptation is too great to suggest in the *Saltarello* the humor and poetic antics of Hawthorne's "Faun." It is based largely on the rhythm of the main melody:



It is one of those phrases that, lacking in definite beauty, seem capable of endless extension and variation. In the incessant motion we are almost reminded of the Finale of Schubert's

great symphony. But we dismiss the thought before it is uttered. The intermediate episodes are of no special importance. In the middle is a striking passage, very similar in conception and construction to the fugal one in the first movement, where, on the figure, imitated in

strict canon, there is built what is really an old-fashioned round in dance-rhythm, at first only in strings, gradually embracing the woodwind, the whole forming one of the longest episodes in the symphony,—an orgy of dance and of counterpoint.

Altogether it seems that a noble plan is suggested and sustained with vigorous feeling and high art through the first two movements. In the third it seems to halt. The fourth has a certain clear agreement with the name "Italian." In its purely objective, almost graphic treatment it might stand with more perfect fitness as the last of a suite of independent tone-pictures, than as the conclusion of a subjective poem, such as the first half of the work promises.

XII

BRAHMS

The symphony was not in agreement with the reactionary attitude of the Romanticists. With the return to Classicism it finds its original importance again. Mendelssohn showed his lack of the true symphonic thought. Correspondingly, his form was largely mere imitation of the old. By this double test, Schumann is more nearly in line with the symphonic masters. As his untitled works expressed truer symphonic feeling, so his freedom in treatment and in structure was path-breaking. Still, one often feels that he was only *about* to realize the highest grasp. He was finding his way. He was transplanting his Romantic spirit in broader, classic fields. In so far as this spirit is reactionary, impulsive, intense, specialized, its forms are, needs, abrupt, fragmental. There must be this perfect correspondence between form and feeling. You cannot pour new wine into old bottles. The writing of symphonies by the

Romanticists was a little too conscious. Chopin wisely refrained entirely. They wrote because they felt a challenge rather from without than from within. Schumann, however, the most profound of them, gradually as his sentiment was deepening and his vision broadening, was growing to fit the mantle of the classic masters.

The real heir, it is often said, was to be another, a younger, coming at a time ripe for mature survey of the great preceding schools which group about Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann. Instead of reacting from the classic and its forms, he mastered them from the outset. He grasped more thoroughly than any other the polyphonic depth of Bach's style. He was the first to unite it with the structural freedom and boldness of Beethoven. We have seen how the vein of Bach's musical thought, profoundest of all, had never found a worthy outline in pure, unsung music.* Brahms gave it the new dress of secular form. Finally, he absorbed the spirit of the Romanticists, which was still crying for more complete utterance; so that, while classic in his form, he is often

* See chapters on Schumann.

called a disciple of Schumann. His work is strictly in fulfilment of Schumann's ideals.

It sometimes seems that in a purely Romantic period there can be little of final truth. And thus the symphony does not specially suit it. It is the age for fragmental bursts, breaking the leading strings of a too limited classicism.

When first you come into a garden, unknown in boundary and contents, you dash here and there in reckless enjoyment, like the bee sipping irresponsibly. This is Romanticism, with its singing of separate beauties, its predominance of pure feeling. When once you begin to trace outlines, limits, order, a meaning, you enjoy the garden as a whole, not in wild, fragmental profusion. This is classicism, with predominance of form. Of the two, the latter is final; the former necessarily precedes.

The symphony is a final summing, a complete view. It is, in its true nature, cosmic, not national. Here lies the reason for that strange lack of patriotism in the poet Goethe. Now, there must be in a classic period a classic reaction, a strong element of intellectuality. There is, besides the mere utterance of emotion, the problem of reconciliation. As against in-

tensity of feeling there must be breadth of vision. Depth is more needful than velocity.

Romanticism is like the minus quantity in algebra. The natural reaction from it, romantic rebellion from romanticism, brings back classicism. The more novel and fresh Brahms is in his feeling, the more he suggests the serene classic repose. But it is in the style, the manner of his working, that we must expect the sharpest difference. And it is here that he is, perhaps, most inspiring. Schumann wrote of Brahms's youthful works under the title "New Paths." It is quite possible that, in a narrower sense, he is merely breaking paths for others. But he is heroically pointing and urging the right way, though the narrow. He insists on uttering his truth within the perfect language of one of the arts, not in the polyglot of all. It is by internal mastery in all its dimensions,—in linear melody, in extent of form, in depth of architectural polyphony that he raises the art, strongest and profoundest of all, to a plane higher than ever before.

Brahms seems, at times, greatest for this very direction of his art, for the courage of his intellectuality. Every one is afraid nowadays

of high art and of its defence. We dread the slur of pedantry. Low art seems to be the cry. Let us not believe it, though the masses are against us. In art, democracy does not count. If a man is charged with intellectual stress, that ought to bring a presumption of greatness, not of weakness. Romanticism pays the penalty for its mad rebound in the extreme abandon of the principles and quality of high art. The looseness of Schubert, the intensity of Schumann, the realism of Berlioz, were naturally followed by modern amorphism and sensationalism.

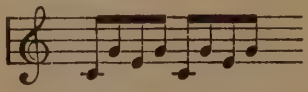
Because a man is difficult to perceive, is felt by the few, is no reason against his greatness. On the contrary, it speaks something for his originality, for his freshness and truth. It was Brahms's great deed to lead back to the high level of the masters,—the only vantage-ground from which music can answer the charge of lack of meaning and worse. Yet, by inherent vigor, the novelty of his poetry, on his first appearance, was such as to flatter the extreme Romanticists, led by Liszt, that a new hero had joined their ranks. No outward act of artist is so impressive as this resolute step of the

youthful Brahms in turning sharply away from that dominant school of shallow aims.

His life and work are a rebuke to the common modern idea of art which has brought it such reproach, so that it is commonly heard that a poet is necessarily abnormal. The work of Brahms is of the kind to show that high art is the very essence, the true abiding-place of pure reason. We have heard too much of the linking of art and poetry with irresponsible abandon to overwrought feeling, too much dissociation of art and ethics. It is time the world sees that the highest of all, the most permanent, though not the first to reach applause, is the art which, yoking profound intellectual mastery with wealth of feeling, stands for fulness of experience, held in rein by a clear sight and a moral balance.

Just how this quality appears concretely and actually in the music, we shall see later in the reading of the symphony. In general, it is by an almost complete return to the mode of writing of Bach, except in the matter of structural outline. We remember how, with the great master of the church style, music was a perfect polyphonic tissue of themal voices.

Then came the sharp secular reaction, with pure monophony: a single melody with impersonal accompaniment, of itself without meaning. After all, there can be, ideally, little dignity in a stereotyped harmonic figure, however beautiful the melody.



So far as an ideal theory of music goes, there can be no doubt of the superiority of the church style. The question is of its test in the reality and truth of its poetic content. We saw a return in the great secular masters to architectural polyphony. But with all its grandeur, it was not a permeating element of their art, which was still based on the idea of a single melody with harmonic support. Duality or plurality of themes existed merely successively, or horizontally; with the Churchmen it was simultaneous, or vertical. We saw, too, how none of the secular masters were affected by Bach's influence and example before Schumann, who absorbed it far more than Mendelssohn or Chopin. So far as the quality of style may be summed in a word, that of Brahms is, in essence,

a reconciliation of Bach's mode of thought with secular freedom of outline, that is well-nigh ideal in its perfection. It goes, in this respect, as far beyond Schumann as the latter went beyond Mendelssohn. One is tempted to view a Brahms as a possible Bach symphony.

Still, one cannot gauge the artistic value and power of Brahms in proportion to this twofold master, however impressive. It must be, first, a question of the poetic reality. You cannot write music or measure it by a theory, however ideal. A man may have a perfect outward mastery and lack poetic content; though this is always found in imitators, who follow the outer manner of another. Brahms was no disciple; for Bach had written no symphonies. Again, however, we remember that in periods of formal development poetry often lagged. So it may be that Brahms has prepared the way for a greater.

Even of Bach the highest value seems to be an influence which reaches the world only through the works of other masters. So it may be with Brahms. His indirect power may be the greatest. There is no possible denying the nobility of his aim and attitude in modern days.

There is a modern striving for unrest, for cyclonic effect, for barbaric brute force, for emotion with a capital E. All true sentiment must be unconscious; and so the effect upon the hearer must be unpremeditated. You cannot expect to *see* the emotion; it must not be too palpable. We must not be able to say, pointing, here it is; else we must also say, here it is not. We must not regard it as a frenzy, as some definite, individualized thing. The truest emotion is one which is most subtle, not seeking to trumpet its war-cry, to conquer an audience by the violence of its noise. On the contrary, careless of immediate reception, it is the expression of the personal feeling, soberly controlled, not roused to unmanageable excess. We do not care to see a man make big eyes or roar himself into a state, either at home or in the concert.

We must not get into a false way of measuring emotion by its brute force. A work is not great in proportion to the number of kettle-drums, as Berlioz seemed to think. The true feeling is like the still small voice; it is the essence of a great personality unconsciously betrayed by highest art.

We recur thus naturally at our close to a vital point of the beginning: the ethical phase of the musical art. Many deny this view to art generally. Few will persist as to poetry. It seems clear that if we agree that the content, not the mere language, is all-important, we must insist on its soundness. In music this has been entirely ignored. If a noble personality can be expressed in music, so can an ignoble. In music as in poetry it is possible by an extravagance of outward beauty to bribe an audience to listen to the morbid, unsound outpourings of a weak spirit. This is another modern danger. We listen too much with exclusive attention to the rapturous beauty of the sound. We do not think of the ethical quality, nor of the ethical effect. If we did, we should give less prominence to music, for example, of a Chopin. The question is all one. The strong, sound spirit, like the true sentiment, is tested by thorough mastery of the art. It proves the quality by its divine patience.

Brahms stands out strangely cold against the intense extremism of moderns. But the nobility of his position lies in a classic rebuke, contemptuously indifferent, to the hysterical men

of tears and sighs, of rage and storms, in his perfection of form, in plan and in detail. There is a giant power, a reposeful mastery without strain, without lack of a corresponding strength and breadth of feeling. The manner of his writing is the result of his poetic personality; the latter is not fitted to the former.

At times there is a preponderance of the workman over the poet, as there was in Bach and in Mozart. This suggests that he may be a Mozart for a future Beethoven. Yet there is a pervading personality in the originality of his melodic thought, and in the homogeneity of his style. He it is who has rescued the art from the abuse of false schools by following the toilsome path which all masters must tread.

XIII

BRAHMS (Continued)

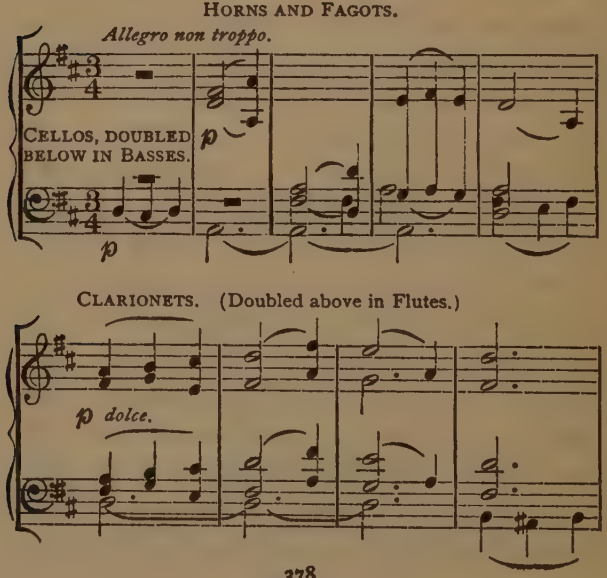
Symphony (No. 2) in D Major.

Once more let us strictly carry out our constant plan, reading the new master purely and absolutely from the score of one of his works, taken at random, seeing no comments on the music nor on the man, so that from the most perfect evidence we may get our impression, first of the symphony, then of the poet. This new figure, writing in the clear air of to-day, who is spoken of in the same breath with Beethoven and Schumann, what can he have to say that is comparable to their thought? And it must be new. To echo them, even to add corollaries to their truth, would not make him a master.

Our first sense is of blended simplicity and novelty,—the latter what Schumann meant by *neue Bahnen.* At the same time it is of an old primeval feeling. The expression is all new; the sentiment is of all time. But above all is

that direct, unaffected simplicity of melody which we found stamped on Beethoven; the spontaneous thought, without pretence or evident effort. The color is the mellow, placid, legendary quality of horns and fagots.

The very beginning, the first three notes in the bass are most unpremeditated. Nationally, the melody is undoubtedly German,—that broad, even sweep, losing its accent in the syncopation of an endless cadence; an utter-

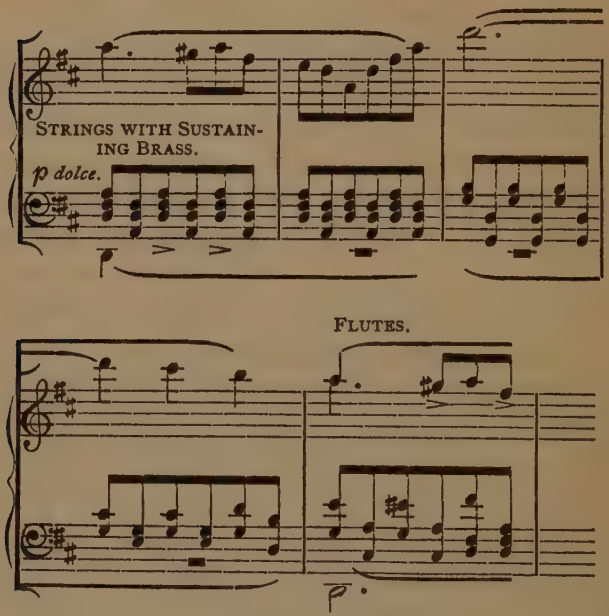


ance of the ancient Teutonic feeling of Wagner with the classic dignity of a master. It is not the modern romance; there is in the placid horns the suggestion of the heroic in repose.

Little is here of the vehement contrasts of the Schumann Romanticism. It is a calm neo-classicism, with all the workmanship of the Bach style. There is an entirely new poetry, clearer, more illumined, coming forth from Romantic caves and dells, enlightened by the revelations of a time that makes havoc with old fancies and illusions. It is distinctly broader, yet not quite with the humanity of a Beethoven,—lacking his strong *morale:* more national, too, in color than Beethoven, in spite of difference in time, and in this respect more special and romantic. Yet it has more than the mere German spirit. There is a new breath in its conventional sentiment, as if including the Slavonic, with its freedom of tone and rhythm. But it is all northern; there is no recovery from the reaction against Italian domination. And there is always the tinge of Hungarian lightness,—clear against German heaviness.

Soon appears a melody in the strings, therefore human and more modern; the heroic

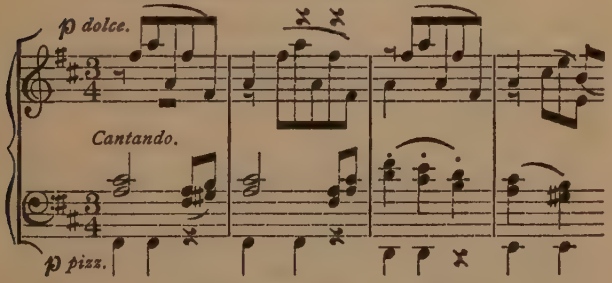
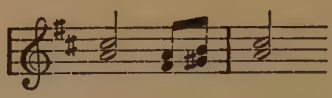
quality is suspended. But the key is the same; there is no progress in tonal residence. It is all in the shadow of the first melody; it is, as yet, no new episode.

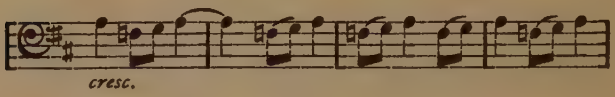


We know, however, that the themes here have not the official importance they had in Haydn and Mozart. Constantly we find several melodies where it is difficult to decide which has the clear title to the nominal rank. Often

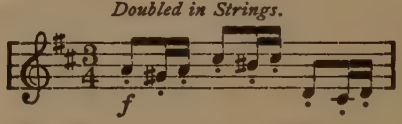
it seems that the function of the old second melody is divided among several. There is one, strictly second in succession, contrasting in character though not in key, whose main business later is to weave about the first melody, in simultaneous harmony, the architectural tissue of the discussion.

The real second melody comes after duly solemn preparation, down in cellos and violas. In mood, it is a return to the primeval air of the main subject, especially when repeated in the

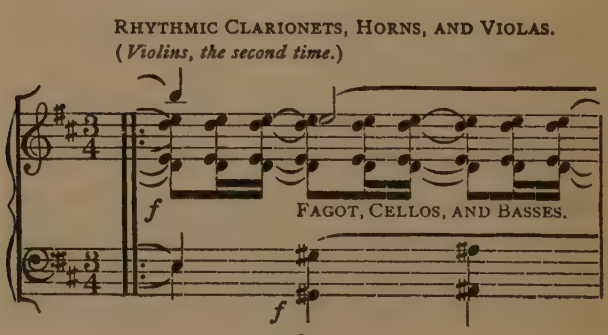
STRINGS. (Melody in Cellos and Violas.)

woodwind, trebled in hollow octaves. It is distinctly the episode of the movement, an outing from the main theme. Though beginning gently, it has the germ of power, and rousing with its plain figure:

repeated through various syncopation:

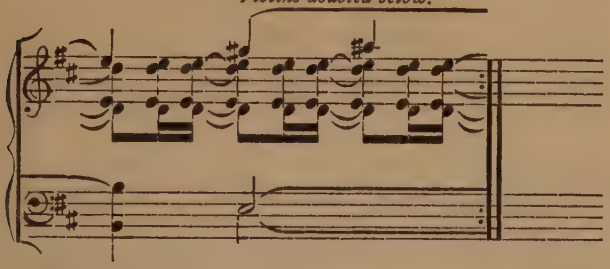


it reaches a climax of heroic effect, with sharp and rough gait, with a strangely nervous motive



(of which we shall speak later), lapsing soon into rhythmic background before a phrase of slow, even swing:





But slowly and dimly do we feel here, in the bass, another phase of the figure of the episodic melody. The effect is splendid, a kind of feudal, heroic pace, well set and maintained. It is like a crusaders' march, banners fluttering together, men tramping in step. Throughout is the spirit of Barbarossa and of mediæval story. Suddenly steals in the gentle flow of the second melody, now in serener major, through which we return to the beginning for a rehearsal of melodies.

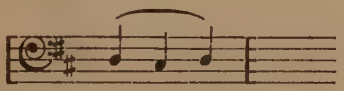
With Brahms we must vary a little our attitude. The infinitesimal detail of this polyphonic net-work is such that the broad view, as in Schubert's C Major, loses too much of the beauty, especially in the age when Brahms is still, to many of us, a new enigma. There may, too, be an ulterior purpose with us to see

something concrete of this novel style. It may be, as we have hinted, that there is more of the artisan than the poet. But the line cannot be drawn.

In any case, a nearer knowledge can but help. We must, then, magnify our view (or hearing) at least for a few periods, until we are accustomed to this new plan of highly defined detail. Indeed, if we once take account of the workmanship, as such, there is, I believe, more bewilderment of architecture in Brahms than in any other master of all time. Not only do you have this pervading unity of small detail, but at the same time the broad lines of the general plan, and the poetic unity of the whole work. It is as if Brahms had written his work once from the structural stand-point, and then had entirely worked over the whole, point by point, with minute, almost invisible perfection. It seems hardly possible for one creating mind to have at once this double sense: one pervading plan in the big, another in smallest execution. Brahms is probably far the greatest example of the saying that genius is an infinite capacity for work. Either kind of unity would seem to suffice even for our high standard. Brahms

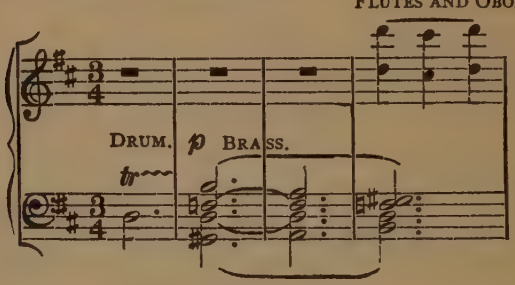
actually combines both. Yet, in itself, all this is mere workmanship. Its real value must lie in its unconscious use for utterance of a poetic conception.

A few glimpses will give a hint of this pervading perfection of detail. To show it in full would need almost a description of every note in the work.

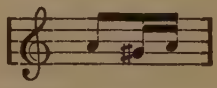
We remember the innocent little phrase before the first melody:

In a curious way, with all our enjoyment of the melodies and their structure, the further we go, looking at lesser figures, the more we are magnetized by the constant reappearance of this motive in every guise, until we wonder whether this is a symphony in three notes. It is as if in a house of larger lines of beauty, we caught, at second and later views, the strange omnipresence of some arabesque curve, of hidden meaning, on ceiling, wall, and floor, large and small, now all but disguised.

In the first quotation we saw it creep in, at beginning and end, with least possible show.

Throughout the cadence from the first melody we meet it. In the long drawn out chords we cannot escape it magnified:



Presently we see it, even where it is not, as when the sun is in our eyes. But surely the first three notes of the second melody are but a quicker pace of the same motto; for at its close the original *tempo* appears clearly. And now it comes thick and fast, until the second theme brings a rest. But the nervous phrase which



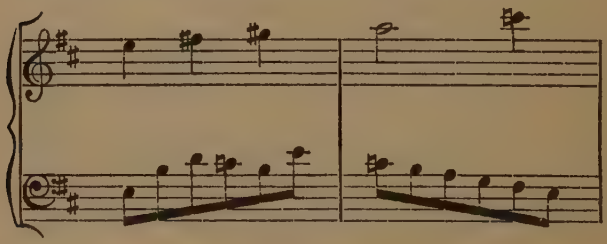
leads the crusaders' march is again a shorter form of those first three notes. It is not good to go farther in this analysis, which is too grammatical for real enjoyment. We can now have a dim consciousness of the significance of the

master's constant treatment. Of course, with him it was the mere simplicity and economy of highest art. Somehow, it seems, more consciousness is needed to perceive than to create. We get, too, a sense of that strangely firm power of sequence, more subtle even than Schumann's, though without his passionate intensity. With Brahms it brings a hidden, yet strong connection of distant regions of the work, which is felt rather than thought. In a true symphony the various movements reinforce each other. We shall find a light, cast from the last movement upon the first.

It must be that in the discussion is the measure of his genius. But so complex is the fine filigree of his poetic diction that one needs the elbow-room of a book to tell of a single work. We must be content with a quicker and cruder view. His symphony is a kind of great modern fugue, where hardly a phrase is not a melodic fragment. Brahms has reduced to the minimum what we might call the irrelevant machinery, rhythmic and harmonic, as distinct from melodic text. Yet he is never dry; there is always the personal and poetic quality, though on a steady plane, with few picturesque

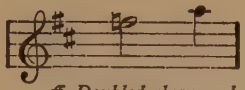
heights. One of the traits that stamp him is the masterly sustaining of vein: the magnificence of his continuous and complete workmanship. He is very different from Schumann in temperament; much more equable; less intense. Wonderful are his vast Olympian levels; but they do not rise as high as Schumann's Gothic peaks.

Quickly we view, after repeated statement, how he slowly climbs from sombre minor of the first part of the original melody with steady insistence to a glorious march in the second:



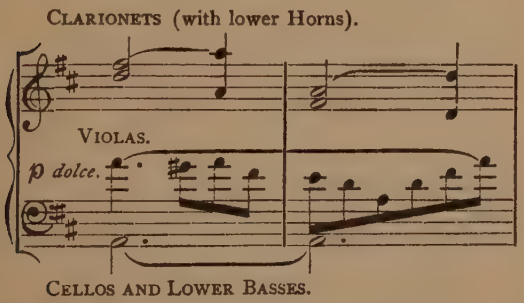
More than ever are the images of that first motto, ever in new rhythmic guise. That broad multiplicity of rhythm is new with Brahms. Then comes the relief of the idyllic, flowing melody, the unofficial second, but in minor, answered by the motto on high, in full sway, almost in stern rebuke, in its slow sounding of

the first three notes of the former. Suddenly break in thunderous unison strokes of an early phrase:

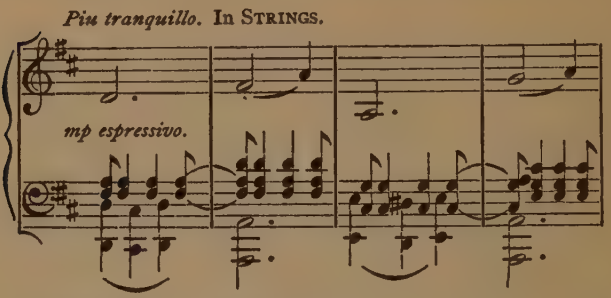


ff Doubled above and twice below.

Gradually, after faint efforts, the first melody flows along with all its old gentleness and a new soothing calm, now not succeeded but entwined by the liquid beauty of the second. And



thus we are in the last singing of themes in original manner, once more, too, with the grand march of crusaders. Later is a burst of great sweetness and power of modulation, followed by a most moving groping through uncertain worlds of thought. Once more breaks in the

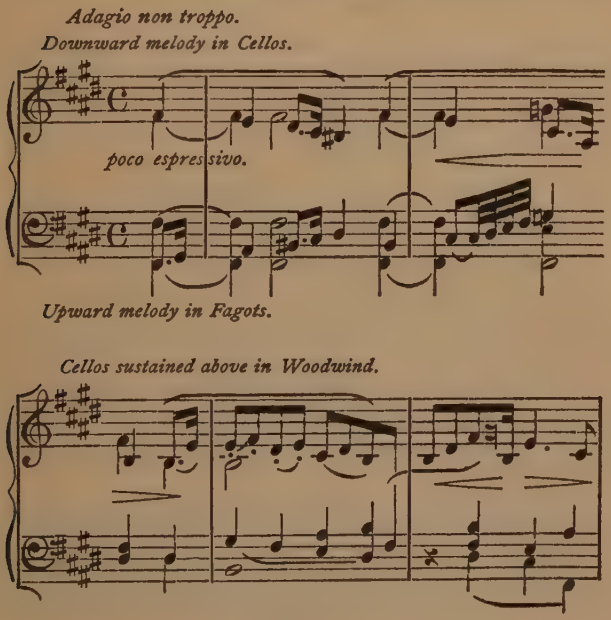
light of main melody, now in a new charm of *berceuse* swing,—still with the motto below:

There is a great tenderness in the ending,—a flood of true feeling enshrouding all the art.

Adagio non Troppo.

Bach lovers know how in many works he is merely the wonderful workman, until, all in an unexpected spot, perhaps all unknown to himself,—almost he seems ashamed of it,—some true bit of feeling comes along, nigh lost in the mass of the other. Something of this there is in Brahms. He seems to begin almost indifferent to beauty of theme; and when we are nearly discouraged, in an unimportant place suddenly comes the human song. Brahms is a little like Wagner, as with both their song

seems merged into discourse, their poetry drawn out into prose. But with Wagner the tissue is too often iteration; with Brahms it is a continuous polyphonic woof.

The melody here seems to have the deceptive quality,—a less promising beginning; the real beauty comes in the answer. Here in the third bar is that golden vein of diatonic melody, that inexhaustible source of highest lyric utterance:



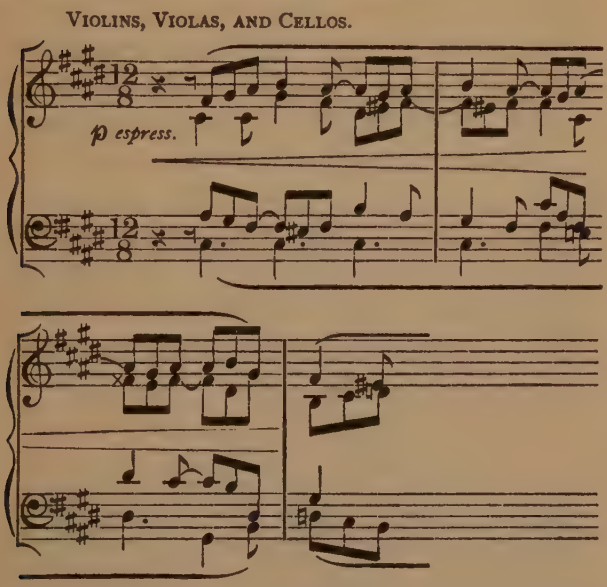
It is, after all, the true natural utterance. Then, too, it is that Brahms way of coming from dim uncertainty to clear light.

And so it flows on, pure, self-contained, melodic discourse. The horn takes up the thread of the last word of repeated theme, the rest join successively. You do not think of the fugue, but they are all talking, beginning in turn on the same subject. When the discussion is becoming technical, all are set at peace with that same altogether satisfying ending of the first melody (quoted above), just like the kindest word of wisest parent.

A curious *Adagio* quality this of Brahms. It is similar to that rare vein of Beethoven that we prized most. Brahms has not quite his deep sympathy. He is more impersonal, like Schubert. There is something of German folk-song here; but it seems broader, more ancient in source, almost Pagan. There is much of modern feeling for Teutonic legend. But the conception is higher and finer than most of such poetry.

A new verse comes now; hardly a clear-cut melody. Curiously, it has exactly the nature of the first. Beginning in a questioning mood,

it grows more anxious, and then is stilled by another broad, soothing cadence:

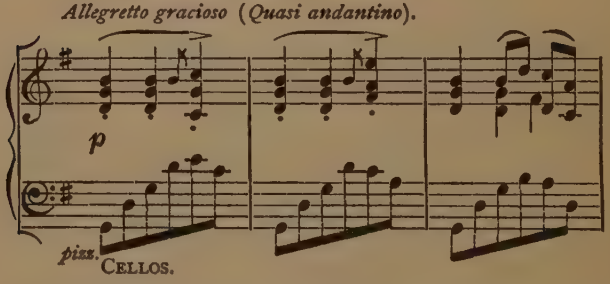


Once more the questioning, grubbing spirit is roused, rearing now a stormy whirl of rebellious doubts. He is laid by a last, calm, broad verse of the main song.

Allegretto Grazioso (*Quasi Andantino*).

In Andantes there is a new Brahms. Architectural depth must yield there to lyric direct-

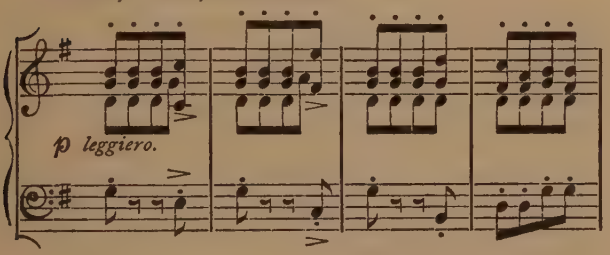
ness. In the slow movement is the true poet who shows that German folk-song is not exhausted, as he does elsewhere in his glorious *Lieder;* that it has new strains, which come from the border-land of newer races. In these song-movements is tested the sentiment of the poet; in the Allegros, the broad view and structural power.

In the Scherzos there is a second departure, almost as great as in the first. The humor of Brahms seems largely an expression of Hungarian lightness. There is complete absence of polyphony. He begins with child-like dance with odd accent:

There is much, too, of Tyrolese drollery. It is all a jolly *bourgeois*, not to say peasant fun. There is none of the serious humor of Beethoven. Yet we do not mean at all that it does

not belong as justly in the symphony. Such prohibition would be intolerable. A symphony even can bear no philosophic intent, unless it be quite unconscious. In the lightness of Brahms's pleasant frolic there is much real poetry.

The humor is in all kinds of smallest touches; sometimes it is a teasing play of voices; at others, of groups of instruments,—a humor of orchestration. You would not catch it in a piano arrangement, as there are sudden modulations or surprises of accent. From the dainty waltz melody of the beginning there darts out a queer, quick dance in even time:

Presto ma non assai.
VIOLINS, VIOLAS, AND CELLOS.



It is, of course, a prank at masquerading the first tune. Some touches defy telling. Right here, in the next bar, the strings try to run off to

another key, another play-ground. The wood won't let them. The strings urge, the wood refuse. Then they run off and for a moment play strutting soldiers. But it is all too light for heavy words. On returning, the first waltz-like dance has a new, delicate pathos, where a second voice discourses sweetly in flowing measure fitted to the slow glide of the theme.

A rough bit of barbaric play interrupts in reckless Presto. It jangles in our Western ears. We lose our sense of tonal bearings, and are glad to return once more to the gentler pace of the German dance.

Allegro con Spirito.

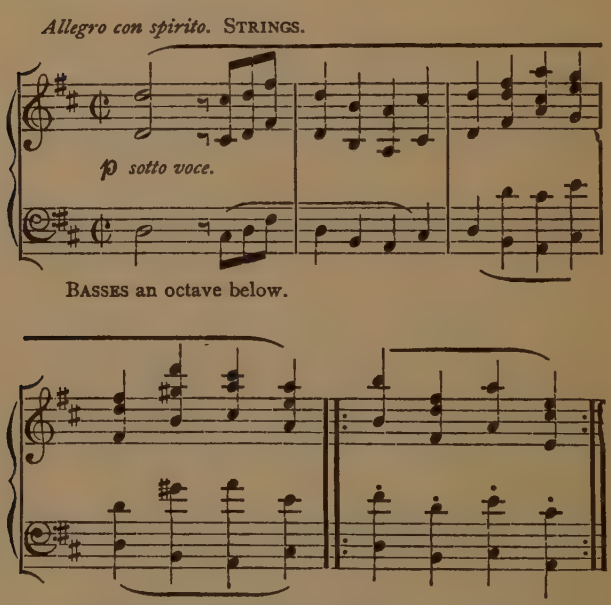
In the Finale is undoubtedly the historic color and the mediæval swing of the beginning. With all the danger of finding fixed meanings, there is no doubt of this, that Brahms, of course, all unconscious in the creating, stands in the highest branch of the highest art for that modern return to the spirit of Teuton legend which has a strange power over our minds to-day, which has been almost a dominant poetic subject of the century. With Brahms it has a great breadth. He had much of the Ossian feeling. Undoubt-

edly his geographical position helped him. Born in the farthest north of Germany, he visited the South, and settled and died in the far East.

If we are asked to show evidence of this theme in Brahms's poetry, we may be helpless in a legal sense. To our own conviction appeals most the very quality of the melodies, which, instead of modern romantic sweetness, have a distinctive rough breadth, and a strangeness which cannot speak of modern things. Simplicity is, of course, of all ages; therefore, at the least, it does not jar on an archaic feeling. It is strange that with a similar breadth in Brahms and in Beethoven, we think of the latter as looking forward; in the former only do we feel the historic spirit. The truth is, these periods differ totally. There was no retrospection early in the century. It was all for new ideas and ideals. To-day there is a constant longing for the sanctity of old conceptions. The modern is the practical and stereotyped; in the ancient lies the poetic truth. Brahms realizes to the full this feeling. He is, thus, representative of his age; his was in pure music the unconscious impulse that drove Tennyson to the King's Idylls and Wagner to

the Nibelungen Epic; and this is the burden of the symphony.

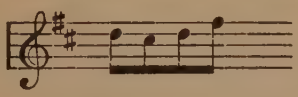
The first melody enters in bleak unison of all the strings:

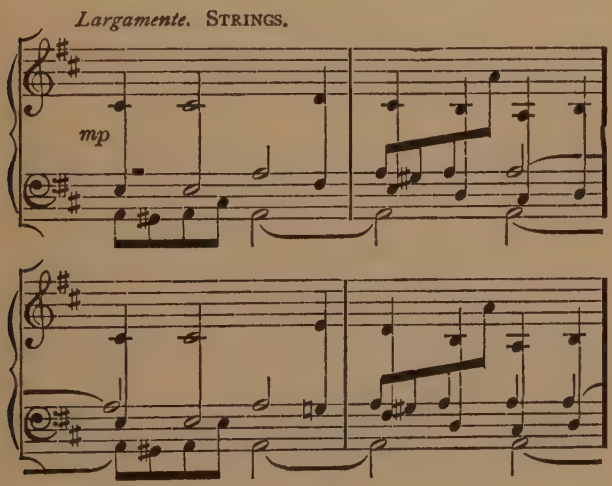


In its stiffness, its set, cramped energy, it has the feudal feeling of the first *Allegro*. When the melody has a learned counter-theme, the atmosphere is more monastic. It has much of

complexity and close texture. But it is bubbling with melody and rhythm.

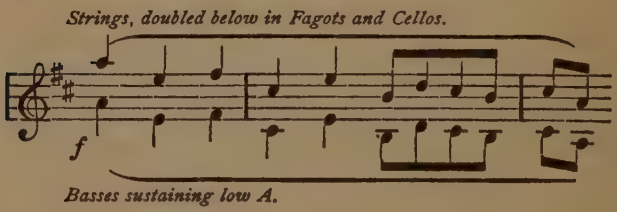
We soon find that, strangely, the first four notes correspond, as motto, to that of the first movement. We do not know whether we ought to notice that the first three notes are in both movements the same. So we have everywhere, in all sorts of garb, this phrase:



Through a misty change of scene we are led to the second melody, which is surely one of

the simple, diatonic kind. Still, the motto is ever present.

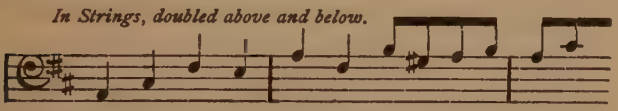
With smooth, sweeping flight it lightly wings aloft in successive curves into a climax of power that did not seem to lie in the germ of the theme. Now the motto has all the say, and there is a great rollicking of pairs of voices, each in duet, in the same motive coursing all about, losing all rein of regular pace, at last quieting down to the first melody.

The answer of the latter at the very beginning we cannot ignore. It has a certain ancient humor, sung as it is in barbaric unison, again and again, like some well-seasoned popular strain:

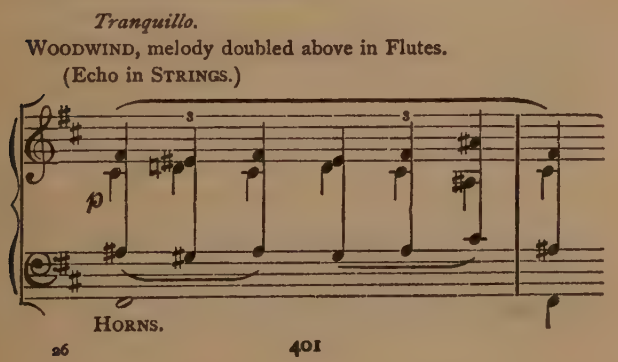


As now the main melody is discussed in fragmentary perversions, this old refrain ever comes in with conclusive air, is even sung fugally. But it serves later to give one of the rarest touches of primeval humor of the sym-

phony. For when at last the final chant of melodies has begun, as at first, and we look above wondering, here is a strange sound from the basses upward,—the inverted disguise of the comic answering strain:

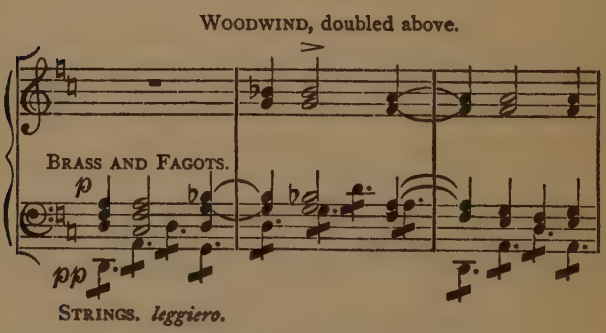


And now we are rolling towards the end, the first song of melodies fuller and more boisterous. There is always the same feeling of march of pious knights. And there are many touches of the kinship of the main themes of first and last movement. For instance, a sudden quiet retreat (which is written *Tranquillo* in the score), seems at first new with its strange, slow swing in four-voiced woodwind:

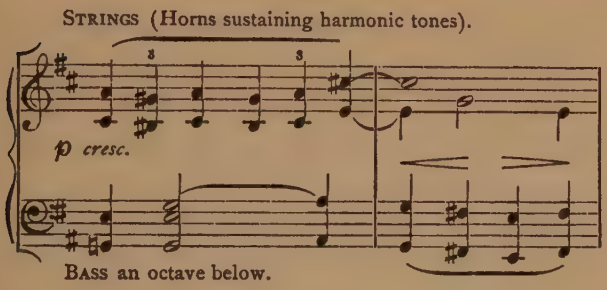


Now, this is, of course, primarily and poetically a romantic refuge from the din of strife. But in its melodic origin it comes not only from the first melody of the finale, but most clearly from the very motto of the original movement. It is, indeed, a melody in this very motto, pure and simple.

Strictly, we have here gone back, for a moment, before the *reprise* of melodies. Returning, after the final rollicking episode, there is a quaint droning of monks' fugue, in second melody, sung in pairs:



This broadens into a march of big idea and spirit, with complex swing, whence suddenly we are again in the timid Tranquillo, now the second legend droning in the bass:



Of course, this has the promise of power. And so the end comes in a martial burst with rapid iteration of this phrase from the second melody.

Brahms may have appeared to us, in all this, as composer rather than as poet. He is, perhaps, too near to see the big lines. He is, too, a recurrence of the simplicity of earliest masters. We must not expect romantic definiteness. But the unity of message is as clear as with any poet. Finally, he may be the pioneer of greater poetry in the paths he has broken.

INDEX

Andante, 32, 45, 49.
Art: Purpose, 14, 19, 30, 68–9; limitations, 30; mode of creation, 249, 347. See also Preface.

Bach, 24, 26, 34, 36–7, 40, 70, 93, 177, 260 *et seq.*, 271, 367 *et seq.*
Beauty, 95, 96, 97, 313.
Beethoven, 14, 19, 32–3, 45–6, 69, 71, 76–7, 82, 85, Chaps. V.–VI., 177–183, 186, 189–90, 194, 201, 226–7, 268–70, 364
Berlioz, 100, 127, 163, 170, 251, 268.
Brahms, 76, 102, 125, 129, 179, 252.

Church school (of composition), 24–27, 31, 34–5, 44–5, 71, 371.
Classicism. (See Romanticism.)
Counterpoint (see Polyphony), 25, 35, 75, 79, 91, 265.
Criticism, 13 *et seq.*, 22, 342.

Dance (see Minuet, Scherzo), 26, 34, 36–8.
Development, 38 *et seq.*, 49, 75–6, 92, 94–5, 130, 134, 153.
Durchführung. (See Development.)

Ethics (in Music), Preface, 20 *et seq.*, 192, 371 *et seq.*

Folk-Song (see National Element), 49, 190, 191, 359.
Form, 95, 98, 192, 250 *et seq.*, 343 *et seq.*, 350 *et seq.*
Fugue, 42, 54, 58.

Goethe, 72, 128, 182–3, 189–91.

INDEX

Handel, 44.
Haydn, 30, 32, Chap. III., 70–2, 83–4, 95–6, 125, 129, 147, 153, 226.
Humor (in Music), 30, 59, 70, 82, 104, 167 *et seq.*, 225 *et seq.*, 322, 338–9, 364.

Interpretation, 333–4.

Jean Paul Richter, 258 *et seq.*

Language. (See Prose.)
Listening, Chap. I., 152, 347–8.
Logic (in Music). See Sequence.

Master (Mastery), 249 *et seq.*, 342 *et seq.*, 350, 369 *et seq.*
Meaning (in Music), 17, 96, 98–9, 100–1, 125 *et seq.*, 148 *et seq.*, 154–5, 167 *et seq.*, 249 *et seq.*, 270 *et seq.*, 278, 308, 310 *et seq.*, 330, 333–34, 344 *et seq.*
Mendelssohn, 79, 155, 170, 185, 210, 252, 263, 265–6, Chap. XI.
Metaphysics (in Music), 134–5, 146, 177, 182, 270 *et seq.*, 289–299.
Minuet (see Dance, Scherzo), 38, 51, 60, 80, 89, 152 *et seq.*
Modulation, 104.
Mozart, 32, 43, 45–6, Chap. IV., 95–6, 125, 130, 153, 178–9, 181, 185, 190, 313.
Music (see Art, Meaning, Symphony, Master): Essence, 18, 99; limitations, 127, 310 *et seq.*; power and purpose, 153 *et seq.*, 330 *et seq.*, 345.

National Element (in Music) (see Folk-Song), 182, 189, 209, 309, 322 *et seq.*, 327, 331, 341.

Opera, 127, 188, 190, 251, 262.
Orchestra, 44, 349.
Overture, 349.

Pathos (in Music), 55, 161–2, 181
Poetry, 37–8, 191, 330.
Polyphony (see Counterpoint), 48, 66, 266.
Programme Music. (See Meaning.)
Prose (see Language), 30, 39, 127, 155, 260, 345

Romanticism, 69, 182 *et seq.*, 270 *et seq.*, 303, 366 *et seq.*
Rondo, 33, 37, 53.

Scarlatti, Domenico, 36–7; Alessandro, 36.
Scherzo, 50, 152 *et seq.*, 163, 167.
Schiller, 98, 123, 182.
Schubert, 66–7, 73, 93, 135–6, 161, 270, 352.
Schumann, 94, 126, 179, 207, 211, 217, Chaps. VIII.–IX., 68–9, 351, 353.
Scotch Symphony, 354.
Sequence, 315–16, 345 *et seq.*
Sonata, 24–29, 71, and, generally, Chap. II.; sonata form, 32–4, 38 *et seq.*, 53, 103; purpose, 31, 73, 75–6.
Symphony: Purpose and Meaning (see, also, Meaning), Chap. II., 42–3, 45, 98, 101, 308–9; kinds of symphonies, 148, 310.

Thought (in Music), 344 *et seq.*
Tonality, 37, 40.

Wagner, 100, 269.
Weber, 183–5, 189–90.

THE END.

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